The Selection of the Time
Nichiren, disciple of Shakyamuni Buddha

When it comes to studying the teachings of Buddhism, one must first learn to understand the time. In the past, when the Buddha Great Universal Wisdom Excellence appeared in the world, he remained for a period of ten small kalpas without preaching a single sutra. Thus the Lotus Sutra says, "Having taken his seat, ten small kalpas pass." And later, "The Buddha knew that the time had not yet come, and though they entreated, he sat in silence."12

Likewise Shakyamuni, the lord of teachings in the present world, spent the first forty and more years of his preaching life without expounding the Lotus Sutra, because, as the sutra says, "the time to preach so had not yet come."3

Lao Tzu remained in his mother's womb for eighty years, waiting to be born,4 and Bodhisattva Maitreya abides in the inner court of the Tushita heaven for a period of 5,670 million years, awaiting the time for his advent in the world. The cuckoo sings when spring is waning, the cock waits until the break of day to crow. If even these lowly creatures have such an understanding of time, then how can a person who wishes to practice the teachings of Buddhism fail to make certain what time it is?

When Shakyamuni Buddha prepared to preach at the place where he had gained enlightenment, the various Buddhas made their appearance in the ten directions, and all the great bodhisattvas gathered around. Brahma, Shakra, and the four heavenly kings came with their robes fluttering. The dragon deities and the eight kinds of nonhuman beings pressed their palms together, the ordinary people of superior capacity bent their ears to listen, and the bodhisattvas who in their present bodies have attained the stage where they perceive the non-birth and non-extinction of the phenomenal world, along with Bodhisattva Moon of Deliverance, all begged the Buddha to preach. But the World-Honored One did not reveal a single word concerning the doctrines that hold that persons of the two vehicles can attain Buddhahood, or that he himself had attained enlightenment countless kalpas in the past, nor did he set forth the most vital teachings of all, those concerning a single moment of life encompassing the three thousand realms and the fact that one can attain Buddhahood in one's present form. There was only one reason for this: the fact that, although his listeners possessed the capacity to understand such doctrines, the proper time had not yet come. Or, as the Lotus Sutra says, "[The reason . . . was that] the time to preach so had not yet come."5
But when Shakyamuni Buddha preached the Lotus Sutra to the gathering on Eagle Peak, the great king Ajatashatru, who had been the most unfilial person in the entire land of Jambudvipa, was allowed to sit among the listeners. Devadatta, who had spent his whole life slandering the Law, was told that in the future he would become the Thus Come One Heavenly King, and the dragon king’s daughter, though impeded by the five obstacles, became a Buddha without changing her reptilian form. Those predestined for the realms of voice-hearers and cause-awakened ones were told that they would in fact become Buddhas, like scorched seeds that unexpectedly sprout and put forth flowers and fruit. The Buddha revealed that he had attained enlightenment countless kalpas in the past, which puzzled his listeners as greatly as if he had asserted that an old man of a hundred was the son of a man of twenty-five. And he also expounded the doctrine of three thousand realms in a single moment of life, explaining that the nine worlds have the potential for Buddhahood and that Buddhahood retains the nine worlds.

Thus a single word of this Lotus Sutra is as precious as a wish-granting jewel, and a single phrase is the seed of all Buddhas. We may leave aside the question of whether Shakyamuni’s listeners at that point possessed the capacity to understand such doctrines or not. The fact is that the time had come for him to preach them. As the sutra says, “Now is the very time when I must decisively preach the great vehicle.”

Question: If one preaches the great Law to people who do not have the capacity to understand it, then the foolish ones among them will surely slander it and will fall into the evil paths of existence. Is the person who does the preaching not to blame for this?

Answer: If a man builds a road for others and someone loses his way on it, is that the fault of the road-builder? If a skilled physician gives medicine to a sick person but the sick person, repelled by the medicine, refuses to take it and dies, should one blame the physician?

Question: The second volume of the Lotus Sutra says, “Do not preach this sutra to persons who are without wisdom.” The fourth volume says, “It must not be distributed or recklessly transmitted to others.” And the fifth volume states, “This Lotus Sutra is the secret storehouse of the Buddhas, the Thus Come Ones. Among the sutras, it holds the highest place. Through the long night I have guarded and protected it and have never recklessly propagated it.” These passages from the sutra would seem to indicate that one should not expound the Law to those who do not have the capacity to understand it.

Answer: I refer you to the passage in the “Never Disparaging” chapter that states, “He would say to people, ‘I have profound reverence for you.’ Among the four kinds of believers there were those who gave way to anger, their minds lacking in purity, and they spoke ill of him and cursed him, saying, ‘This ignorant monk.’” The chapter also says, “Some among the group would take sticks of wood or tiles and stones and beat and pelt him.” And in the “Encouraging Devotion” chapter it says, “There will be many ignorant people who will curse and speak ill of us and will attack us with swords and staves.” These passages imply that one should preach the Law even though one may be reviled and cursed and even beaten for it. Since the sutra so teaches, is the one who preaches to blame?

Question: Now these two views appear to be as incompatible as fire and water. May I ask how one is to resolve this dilemma?
Maya, he secluded himself in the heaven of the thirty-three gods for a period of ninety days and there preached the Maya Sutra. Where his father and mother were concerned, one would think he could not possibly withhold even the most secret teaching of the Law. And yet he did not preach the Lotus Sutra for them. In the final analysis, the Buddha's preaching of the Lotus Sutra has nothing to do with the capacities of his listeners. As long as the proper time had not yet come, he would on no account expound it.

Question: When is the time for the preaching of the Hinayana sutras and the provisional sutras, and when is the time for the preaching of the Lotus Sutra?

Answer: Even bodhisattvas, from those at the ten stages of faith to great bodhisattvas on the level of near-perfect enlightenment, find it difficult to judge matters concerning time and capacity. How then can ordinary beings such as ourselves be able to judge such matters?

Question: Is there no way to determine them?

Answer: Let us borrow the eye of the Buddha to consider this question of time and capacity. Let us use the sun of the Buddha to illuminate the nation.

Question: What do you mean by that?

Answer: In the Great Collection Sutra, Shakyamuni Buddha, the World-Honored One of Great Enlightenment, addresses Bodhisattva Moon Storehouse and predicts the future. Thus he says that the first five hundred years after his passing will be the age of attaining liberation, and the next five hundred years, the age of meditation (making one thousand years). The next five hundred years will be the age of reading, reciting, and listening, and the next five hundred years, the age of building temples and stupas (making two thousand
years). In the next five hundred years, quarrels and disputes will arise among the adherents to my teachings, and the pure Law will become obscured and lost.”

These five five-hundred-year periods, which total twenty-five hundred years, are delineated in different ways by different people. The Meditation Master Tao-ch’o of China declares that during the first four of the five five-hundred-year periods, which constitute the Former and Middle Days of the Law, the pure Law of the Hinayana and Mahayana teachings will flourish, but that after the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law these teachings will all perish. At that time, only those who practice the Pure Land teaching, the pure Law of the Nembutsu, will be able to escape the sufferings of birth and death.

The Japanese priest Honen defines the situation in this way. According to him, the Lotus, Flower Garland, Mahavairochana, and various Hinayana sutras that have spread in Japan, along with the teachings of the Tendai, True Word, Precepts, and other schools, constitute the pure Law of the two thousand years of the Former and Middle Days of the Law referred to in the passage from the Great Collection Sutra cited above. But once the world enters the Latter Day of the Law, all these teachings will be completely obliterated. Even though people should continue to practice such teachings, not a single one of them will succeed in escaping from the sufferings of birth and death. Thus The Commentary on the Ten Stages Sutra and the priest T’an-juan refer to such teachings as the “difficult-to-practice way”; Tao-ch’o declares that “not a single person has ever attained Buddhahood” through them; and Shan-tao says that “not even one person in a thousand” can be saved by them. After the pure Law of these teachings has become obscured and lost, then the great pure Law—namely, the three Pure Land sutras and the single practice of calling upon the name of Amida Buddha—will make its appearance, and when people devote themselves to this practice, even though they may be evil or ignorant, “ten persons out of ten and a hundred persons out of a hundred will be reborn in the Pure Land.”

This is the meaning of the passage: “Only this doctrine of the Pure Land offers a road by which one can gain admittance.”

Honen therefore declares that, if people desire happiness in the next life, they should withdraw their support from Mount Hiei, To-ji, Onjo-ji, and the seven major temples of Nara, as well as from all the various temples and monasteries throughout the land of Japan, and should seize all the fields and landholdings that have been donated to these temples and devote these resources to the building of Nembutsu halls. If they do so, they will be certain to be reborn in the Pure Land. Thus he urges them to recite the words Namu Amida Butsu.

It has now been more than fifty years since these teachings spread throughout our country. My refutation of these evil doctrines is now a thing of the past. There is no doubt that our present age corresponds to the fifth five-hundred-year period described in the Great Collection Sutra, when “the pure Law will become obscured and lost.” But after the pure Law is obscured and lost, the great pure Law of Nam-myoho-rence-kyo, the heart and core of the Lotus Sutra, will surely spread and be widely declared throughout the land of Jambudvipa—with its eighty thousand kingdoms, their eighty thousand rulers, and the ministers and people in the domain of each ruler—just as the name of Amida is now chanted by the mouths of the priests, nuns, laymen, and laywomen in Japan.
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Question: What passages can you cite to prove this?

Answer: The seventh volume of the Lotus Sutra says, "After I have passed into extinction, in the last five-hundred-year period you must spread it abroad widely throughout Jambudvipa and never allow it to be cut off." This indicates that to "spread it abroad widely" will be accomplished in the time after "the pure Law becomes obscured and lost," as the Great Collection Sutra puts it.

Again, the sixth volume states, "In the evil age of the Latter Day of the Law if there is someone who can uphold this sutra . . ." The fifth volume states, "In the latter age hereafter, when the Law is about to perish . . ." The fourth volume states, "Since hatred and jealousy toward this sutra abound even when the Thus Come One is in the world, how much more will this be so after his passing?" The fifth volume says, "It will face much hostility in the world and be difficult to believe." And the seventh volume, speaking of the fifth five-hundred-year period, which is the age of quarrels and disputes, says that evil devils, the devils' people, heavenly beings, dragons, yakshas, and kumbhanka demons will seize the advantage.

The Great Collection Sutra says, "Quarrels and disputes will arise among the adherents to my teachings." The fifth volume of the Lotus Sutra similarly says, "In that evil age there will be monks," "Or there will be forest-dwelling monks," and "Evil demons will take possession of others."

These passages describe the following situation. During the fifth five-hundred-year period, eminent priests who are possessed by evil demons will be found everywhere throughout the country. At that time, a single wise man will appear. The eminent priests who are possessed by evil demons will deceive the ruler, his ministers, and the common people into slandering and abusing this man, attacking him with sticks, staves, shards, and rubble, and condemning him to exile or death. At that time, Shakyamuni, Many Treasures, and the Buddhas of the ten directions will speak to the great bodhisattvas who sprang up from the earth, and the great bodhisattvas will in turn report to Brahma, Shakra, the gods of the sun and moon, and the four heavenly kings. As a result, strange occurrences and unusual disturbances will appear in abundance in the heavens and on earth.

If there are countries whose rulers fail to heed this warning, then the Buddhas and the great bodhisattvas will order neighboring countries to attack the evil rulers and evil priests of those countries. Then great struggles and disputes such as have never been known in the past will break out in Jambudvipa.

At that time, all the people living in the land illuminated by the sun and moon, fearing the destruction of their nation or the loss of their lives, will pray to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas for help. And if there is no sign that their prayers will be answered, they will put their faith in this single humble priest whom they earlier hated. Then all the countless eminent priests, the great rulers of the eighty thousand countries, and the numberless common people will all bow their heads to the ground, press their palms together, and in one voice will chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. It will be like that occasion during the Buddha's demonstration of his ten supernatural powers, described in the "Supernatural Powers" chapter of the Lotus Sutra, when all the beings in the worlds of the ten directions, without a single exception, turned toward the saha world and cried out together in a loud voice, "Hail, Shakyamuni Buddha! Hail, Shakyamuni Buddha! Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, Nam-myoho-renge-kyo!"
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Question: The sutra passages you have cited clearly prove your point. But are there any prophecies in the writings of T'ien-t'ai, Miao-lo, or Dengyo that would support your argument?

Answer: Your process of questioning is backwards. If I had cited passages from the commentaries of men such as T'ien-t'ai and the others and you had then asked whether there were passages from the sutras and treatises to support them, that I could understand. But since I have already cited sutra passages that clearly prove the argument, it is hardly necessary to ask if there are similar passages in the commentaries. If by chance you found that the sutras and the commentaries disagreed, would you then discard the sutras and follow the commentaries?

Question: What you say is perfectly true. Nevertheless, we ordinary people have only a very remote idea of what the sutras mean, while the commentaries are more accessible and easier to understand. If there are clear passages of proof in such relatively understandable commentaries, then citing them might help us have greater faith in your argument.

Answer: I can see that you are very sincere and earnest in your questioning, so I will cite a few passages from the commentaries. The Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai states, “In the last five-hundred-year period, the mystic way will spread and benefit humankind far into the future.”36 The Great Teacher Miao-lo says, “The beginning of the Latter Day of the Law will not be without inconspicuous benefit.”37

The Great Teacher Dengyo declares: “The Former and Middle Days are almost over, and the Latter Day is near at hand. Now indeed is the time when the one vehicle of the Lotus Sutra will prove how perfectly it fits the capacities of all people. How do we know this is true? Because the ‘Peaceful Practices’ chapter of the Lotus Sutra states, ‘In the latter age hereafter, when the Law is about to perish, [accept and embrace the Lotus Sutra].’”38 And Dengyo further states: “Speaking of the age, [the propagation of the true teaching will begin] in the age when the Middle Day of the Law ends and the Latter Day opens. Regarding the land, it will begin in a land to the east of T'ang and to the west of Katsu.39 As for the people, it will spread among people stained by the five impurities who live in a time of conflict. The sutra says, ‘Since hatred and jealousy toward this sutra abound even when the Thus Come One is in the world, how much more will this be so after his passing?’ There is good reason for this statement.”40

Shakyamuni Buddha was born in the kalpa of continuance, in the ninth period of decrease, when the span of human life was diminishing and measured a hundred years. The period when the span of human life diminishes from a hundred years to ten years accordingly falls within the period represented by the fifty years of the Buddha’s preaching life, the two thousand years of the Former and Middle Days of the Law that follow his passing, and the ten thousand years of the Latter Day of the Law that follow that. During this period, the Lotus Sutra was destined to be propagated and spread widely on two occasions. The first was the last eight years of the Buddha’s life [when he preached the Lotus Sutra], and the second is the five hundred years at the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law.

T’ien-t’ai, Miao-lo, and Dengyo were not born early enough to be present when the Buddha was in the world and preached the Lotus Sutra, nor were they born late enough to be present in the Latter Day of the Law. To their regret, they were born in the interval between these two times, and it is clear from their writings that they
looked forward with longing to the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law.

Their was like the case of the seer Asita who, when he viewed the newborn Prince Siddhartha [the future Shakymuni Buddha], remarked in sorrow: “I am already over ninety, so I will not live to see this prince attain enlightenment. After my death, I will be reborn in the world of formlessness, so I cannot be present during the fifty years when he preaches his teachings, nor can I be reborn in this world during the Former, Middle, or Latter Day of the Law!” 41 Such was his lament.

All those who are determined to attain the way should take note of these examples and rejoice. Those concerned about their next life would do better to be common people in this, the Latter Day of the Law, than be mighty rulers during the two thousand years of the Former and Middle Days of the Law. Why won’t people believe this? Rather than be the chief priest of the Tendai school, it is better to be a leper who chants Nam-myoho-renge-kyo! As Emperor Wu of the Liang dynasty said in his vow:42 “I would rather be Devadatta and sink into the hell of incessant suffering than be the non-Buddhist sage Udraka Ramaputra.”

Question: Do the scholars Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu say anything about this principle [of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo]?

Answer: Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu knew about it in their hearts, but they did not expound it in words.

Question: Why did they not expound it?

Answer: There are many reasons. For one, the people of their day did not have the capacity to understand it. Second, it was not the proper time. Third, these men were bodhisattvas taught by the Buddha in his transient status and hence had not been entrusted with the task of expounding it.

Question: Could you explain the matter in greater detail?

Answer: The Former Day of the Law began on the sixteenth day of the second month, the day after the Buddha’s passing. The Venerable Mahakashyapa received the transmission of the Buddha’s teachings and propagated them for the first twenty years. For the next twenty years, this task fell to the Venerable Ananda, for the next twenty years to Shanavasa, for the next twenty years to Upagupta, and for the next twenty years to Dhiratka. By that time a hundred years had passed. But the only teachings that were spread widely during this period were those of the Hinayana sutras. Even the titles of the Mahayana sutras failed to receive mention, so the Lotus Sutra, needless to say, was not propagated at this time.

Men such as Mikkaka, Buddhamitra, Parshva, and Punyayashas then inherited the teachings, and during the remainder of the first five hundred years after the Buddha’s passing, the doctrines of the Mahayana sutras began little by little to come to light, although no particular effort was made to propagate them. Attention was concentrated on the Hinayana sutras alone. All this transpired during the period mentioned in the Great Collection Sutra as the first five hundred years, which constitute the age of attaining liberation.

During the latter part of the Former Day of the Law, six hundred to a thousand years after the Buddha’s passing, there appeared such men as Bodhisattva Ashvaghosha, the Venerable Kapimala, Bodhisattva Nagarjuna, Bodhisattva Aryadeva, the Venerable Rahula, Samghanandi, Samghayashas, Kumrata, Jayata, Vasubandhu, Manorhita, Haklenayashas, and Aryasimha.43 These more than ten teachers started out as adherents of non-Buddhist doctrines. Following that, they made a thorough study of the Hinayana sutras, and still
later they turned to the Mahayana sutras and used them to disprove and demolish the doctrines of the Hinayana sutras.

But although these great men used the Mahayana sutras to refute the Hinayana, they did not fully clarify the superiority of the Lotus Sutra in comparison to the other Mahayana sutras. Even though they did touch somewhat on this question, they did not make clear such vitally important doctrines as the ten mystic principles of the theoretical teaching and of the essential teaching, the fact that persons of the two vehicles can attain Buddhahood, the fact that the Buddha attained enlightenment countless kalpas in the past, the fact that the Lotus Sutra is the foremost in all the sutras preached in the past, present, or future, or the doctrines of the hundred worlds and thousand factors and of three thousand realms in a single moment of life.

They did no more than point a finger at the moon, as it were, or touch on some parts of the Lotus Sutra. But they said nothing at all about whether or not the process of instruction is revealed from beginning to end, whether or not the original relationship between teacher and disciple is clarified, or which teachings would lead to enlightenment and which would not. Such, then, were the developments in the latter five hundred years of the Former Day of the Law, the time noted in the Great Collection Sutra as the age of meditation.

By some time after the thousand years of the Former Day of the Law, Buddhist teachings had spread throughout the entire land of India. But in many cases, Hinayana doctrines prevailed over those of the Mahayana, or provisional sutras were permitted to overshadow and efface the sutra of the true teaching. In a number of respects, Buddhism was in a chaotic condition. Gradually, the number of persons attaining enlightenment declined, while countless others, though adhering to Buddhist doctrines, fell into the evil paths.

Fifteen years after the beginning of the Middle Day of the Law, which followed the thousand years of the Former Day, Buddhism spread eastward and was introduced into the land of China. During the first hundred years or more of the first half of the Middle Day of the Law, the Buddhist doctrines introduced from India were vigorously disputed by the Taoist teachers of China, and neither side could win a clear victory. Though it appeared at times as though the issue had been decided, those who embraced Buddhism were as yet lacking in deep faith. Therefore, if it had become apparent that the sacred teachings of Buddhism were not a unified doctrine but were divided into Hinayana and Mahayana, provisional and true, and exoteric and esoteric teachings, then some of the believers might have had doubts and turned instead to the non-Buddhist teachings. It was perhaps because the Buddhist monks Kashyapa Matanga and Chu Fa-lan feared such a result that they made no mention of such divisions as Mahayana and Hinayana or provisional and true teachings when they brought Buddhism to China, though they were perfectly aware of them.

During the five dynasties that followed, the Wei, Chin, Sung, Ch'i, and Liang, disputes took place within Buddhism over the differences between the Mahayana and Hinayana, provisional and true, and exoteric and esoteric teachings, and it was impossible to determine which was correct. As a result, from the rular on down to the common people, there were many who had doubts about the doctrine.

Buddhism thus became split into ten different schools: the three schools of the south and seven schools of the north. In the south there were the schools that divided the Buddha's teachings into
three periods, into four periods, and into five periods, while in the north there were the five period school, the school that recognized incomplete word and complete word teachings, the four doctrine school, five doctrine school, six doctrine school, the two Mahayana doctrine school, and the one voice school.\textsuperscript{47}

Each of these schools clung fiercely to its own doctrines and clashed with the others like fire encountering water. Yet in general they shared a common view. Namely, among the various sutras preached during the Buddha’s lifetime, they put the Flower Garland Sutra in first place, the Nirvana Sutra in second place, and the Lotus Sutra in third place. They admitted that, in comparison to such sutras as the Agama, Wisdom, Vimalakirti, and Brahma-Excellant Thought, the Lotus Sutra represents the truth, and that it is a complete and final sutra, and sets forth correct views. But they held that, in comparison to the Nirvana Sutra, it represents a doctrine of non-eternity, a sutra that is neither complete nor final, and a sutra that puts forth erroneous views.

From the end of the fourth through the beginning of the fifth hundred years following the introduction of Buddhism in the Later Han dynasty, in the time of the Ch’en and Sui dynasties, there lived a humble priest named Chih-i, the man who would later be known as the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai Chih-che. He refuted the mistaken doctrines of the northern and southern schools and declared that among the teachings of the Buddha’s lifetime the Lotus Sutra ranks first, the Nirvana Sutra second, and the Flower Garland Sutra third. This is what occurred in the first five hundred years of the Middle Day of the Law, the period corresponding to that described in the Great Collection Sutra as the age of reading, reciting, and listening. During the latter five hundred years of the Middle Day of the Law, in the reign of Emperor T’ai-tsung at the beginning of the T’ang dynasty, the Tripitaka Master Hsüan-tsong journeyed to India, spending nineteen years visiting temples and stupas in the 130 states of India and meeting with numerous Buddhist scholars. He investigated all the profound doctrines contained in the twelve divisions of the scriptures and the eighty thousand sacred teachings of Buddhism and encountered therein the two schools of the Dharma Characteristics and the Three Treatises.

Of these two, the Mahayana Dharma Characteristics doctrine was said to have been taught long ago by Maitreya and Asanga and in more recent times by the Scholar Shilabheda. Shilabheda transmitted it to Hsüan-tsang, who brought it to China and taught it to Emperor T’ai-tsung.

The heart of the Dharma Characteristics doctrine lies in its assertion that Buddhist teachings should accord with the capacities of the listeners. If people have the capacity to understand the doctrine of the one vehicle, then the doctrine of the three vehicles can be no more than an expedient to instruct them, and the doctrine of the one vehicle, the only true way of enlightening them. For people such as these, the Lotus Sutra should be taught. On the other hand, if they have the capacity to understand the three vehicles, then the one vehicle can be no more than an expedient to instruct them, and the three vehicles, the only true way of enlightening them. For people such as these, the Profound Secrets and Shrimala sutras should be taught. This, say the proponents of the Dharma Characteristics school, is a principle that T’ien-t’ai Chih-che failed to understand.

Emperor T’ai-tsung was a worthy ruler whose name was known throughout the world and who was said to
have surpassed in virtue the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors of antiquity. He not only reigned over the entire land of China, but also extended his influence to more than eighteen hundred foreign countries ranging from Kao-ch’ang in the west to Koguryō in the east. He was regarded as a ruler who had mastered both Buddhist and non-Buddhist teachings. And since Hsüan-tsang was first in the favor and devotion of this worthy ruler, there was none among the leaders of the T’ien-t’ai school who ventured to risk losing his head by challenging him, and the true teachings of the Lotus Sutra were neglected and forgotten throughout the country.

During the reigns of T’ai-tsung’s heir, Emperor Kao-tsung, and Kao-tsung’s stepmother, Empress Wu, there lived a priest called Fa-tsang. He observed that the T’ien-t’ai school was under attack from the Dharma Characteristics school and took this opportunity to champion the Flower Garland Sutra, which T’ien-t’ai had relegated to a lower place, declaring that the Flower Garland Sutra should rank first, the Lotus Sutra second, and the Nirvana Sutra third among the sutras preached during the Buddha’s lifetime.

In the reign of Emperor Hsüan-tsung, the fourth ruler following T’ai-tsung, in the fourth year of the K’ai-yüan era (716), the Tripitaka Master Shan-wu-wéi came to China from the western land of India, and in the eighth year of the same era, the Tripitaka masters Chin-kang-chih and Pu-k’ung also came to China from India. These men brought with them the Mahavairochana, Diamond Crown, and Susiddhikara sutras and founded the True Word school. This school declares that there are two types of Buddhist teachings: the exoteric teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha, which are expounded in the Flower Garland, Lotus, and similar sutras, and the esoteric teachings of Mahavairochana Buddha, which are expounded in the Mahavairochana and similar sutras. The Lotus Sutra holds first place among the exoteric teachings. But although its fundamental principles somewhat resemble those of the esoteric teachings expounded by Mahavairochana Buddha, it contains no description whatsoever of the mudras and mantras to be used in religious rituals. It fails to include any reference to the three mysteries of body, mouth, and mind, and hence is to be regarded as a sutra that is neither complete nor final.

Thus all of these three schools mentioned above, the Dharma Characteristics, Flower Garland, and True Word, attacked the T’ien-t’ai school, which was based on the teachings of the Lotus Sutra. Perhaps because none of the members of the T’ien-t’ai school could measure up to the stature of the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai, though they were aware of the falsity of these other teachings, they did not attempt to speak out against them in public as T’ien-t’ai had. As a result, everyone throughout the country, from the ruler and high ministers on down to the common people, was led astray from the true teachings of Buddhism, and no one any longer came to gain the Buddha way. Such were the events of the first two hundred or more years of the latter five-hundred-year period of the Middle Day of the Law.

Some four hundred years after the beginning of the Middle Day of the Law, the sacred scriptures of Buddhism were brought to Japan from the kingdom of Paekche, along with a wooden statue of the Buddha Shakyamuni, and also priests and nuns. At this time the Liang dynasty in China was coming to an end, to be replaced by the Ch’én dynasty, while in Japan, Emperor Kinmei, the thirtieth sovereign since Emperor Jimmu, was on the throne.

Kinmei’s son, Emperor Yomei, had a son named Prince Jogu who not only
worked to spread the teachings of Buddhism but also designated the Lotus Sutra, Vimalakirti Sutra, and Shrimala Sutra as texts that would insure the protection of the nation. Later, in the time of the thirty-seventh sovereign, Emperor Kotoku (r. 645–654), the teachings of the Three Treatises and Establishment of Truth schools were introduced to Japan by the Administrator of Priests Kanroku from Paekche. During the same period, the priest Dosho, who had been to China, introduced the teachings of the Dharma Characteristics and Dharma Analysis Treasury schools.

In the reign of Empress Gensho (r. 715–724), the forty-fourth sovereign, a monk from India called the Tripitaka Master Shan-wu-wei brought the Mahavairochana Sutra to Japan, but he returned to China, where he had been residing, without spreading its teachings abroad in Japan. In the reign of Emperor Shomu (r. 724–749), the forty-fifth sovereign, the Flower Garland school was introduced from the kingdom of Silla by a priest of that state called the Preceptor Shinjo. The Administrator of Priests Roben inherited its teachings and in turn introduced them to Emperor Shomu. He also helped construct the great image of the Buddha at Todai-ji. During the time of the same emperor, the Reverend Ganjin came from China, bringing with him the teachings of the T’ien-t’ai and Precepts schools. But although he spread the Precepts teachings and built a Hinayana ordination platform at Todai-ji, he died without even so much as mentioning the name of the Lotus school.

Eight hundred years after the beginning of the Middle Day of the Law, in the reign of the fiftieth sovereign, Emperor Kammu (r. 781–806), there appeared a young priest without reputation named Saicho, who was later to be known as the Great Teacher Dengyo. At first he studied the doctrines of the six schools—Three Treatises, Dharma Characteristics, Flower Garland, Dharma Analysis Treasury, Establishment of Truth, and Precepts—as well as the Zen teaching, under the Administrator of Priests Gyohyo and others. Later he founded a temple called Kokusho-ji, which in time came to be known as Mount Hiei. There he pored over the sutras and treatises of the six schools, as well as the commentaries written by their leaders. But he found that these commentaries often contradicted the sutras and treatises upon which these schools relied and were replete with one-sided opinions. It became apparent to him that if people were to accept such teachings they would all fall into the evil paths of existence. In addition, though the leaders of each of the different schools proclaimed that they had understood the true meaning of the Lotus Sutra and praised their own particular interpretation, none of them had in fact understood its teachings correctly. Saicho felt that if he were to state this opinion openly it would surely lead to quarrels and disputes. But if he remained silent, he would be going against the spirit of the Buddha’s vow. He agonized over what course to take, but in the end, fearful of violating the Buddha’s admonition, made known his views to Emperor Kammu.

Emperor Kammu, startled at his declaration, summoned the leading authorities of the six schools to engage in debate. At first these scholars in their pride were similar to banners raised aloft like mountains, and their evil minds worked like poisonous snakes, but in the end they were forced to bow in defeat in the presence of the ruler, and each and every person of the six schools and the seven major temples of Nara acknowledged himself a disciple of Saicho.

It was like that earlier occasion when the Buddhist scholars of northern and southern China gathered in the palace
of the Ch’én dynasty and, having been bested in debate by the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai, became his disciples. But [of the three types of learning] T’ien-t’ai had employed only perfect meditation and perfect wisdom. The Great Teacher Dengyo, by contrast, attacked the Hinayana specific ordination for administering the precepts, which T’ien-t’ai had failed to controvert, and administered the Mahayana specific ordination described in the Brahma Net Sutra to eight eminent priests of the six schools. In addition, he established on Mount Hiei a specific ordination platform for administering the precepts of the perfect and immediate enlightenment of the Lotus Sutra. Thus the specific ordination in the precepts of perfect and immediate enlightenment at Enryaku-ji on Mount Hiei was not only the foremost ordination ceremony in Japan, but a great ordination in the precepts of Eagle Peak such as had never been known either in India or China or anywhere else in Jambudvipa during the eighteen hundred or more years since the Buddha’s passing. This ceremony of ordination had its beginning in Japan.

If we examine the merit achieved by the Great Teacher Dengyo, we would have to say that he is a sage who surpasses Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu and who excels both T’ien-t’ai and Miao-lo. If so, then what priest in Japan today could turn his back on the perfect precepts of the Great Teacher Dengyo, whether he belongs to To-ji, Onjo-ji, or the seven major temples of Nara, or whether he is a follower of one of the eight schools or of the Pure Land, Zen, or Precepts school in whatever corner of the land? The priests of the nine regions of China became the disciples of the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai with respect to the perfect meditation and perfect wisdom that he taught. But since no ordination platform for universally administering the precepts of perfect and immediate enlightenment was ever established in China, some of them might not have become his disciples with regard to the precepts. In Japan, however, [because Dengyo in fact established such an ordination platform] any priests who fail to become disciples of the Great Teacher Dengyo can only be regarded as non-Buddhists and men of evil.

As to the question of which of the two newer schools brought from China is superior, the Tendai or the True Word, the Great Teacher Dengyo was perfectly clear in his mind. But he did not demonstrate which was superior in public debate, as he had done previously with regard to the relative merit of the Tendai school in comparison to the six older schools. Perhaps on that account, after the passing of the Great Teacher Dengyo, To-ji, the seven major temples of Nara, Onjo-ji, and other temples throughout the provinces of Japan all began proclaiming that the True Word school is superior to the Tendai school, until everyone from the ruler on down to the common people believed that such was the case.

Thus the true spirit of the Tendai Lotus school really flourished only during the lifetime of the Great Teacher Dengyo. Dengyo lived at the end of the Middle Day of the Law, during the period described in the Great Collection Sutra as the age of building temples and stupas. The time had not yet arrived when, as the Great Collection Sutra says, “Quarrels and disputes will arise among the adherents to my teachings, and the pure Law will become obscured and lost.”

Now more than two hundred years have passed since we entered the Latter Day of the Law, a time of which, as the Great Collection Sutra records, the Buddha predicted that “quarrels and disputes will arise among the adherents to my teachings, and the pure Law will become obscured and lost.” If these words of the Buddha are true, it is a
time when the whole land of Jambudvipa will without doubt be embroiled in quarrels and disputes.

Reports reaching us say that the entire land of China, with its 360 states and 260 or more provinces, has already been conquered by the kingdom of the Mongols. The Chinese capital was conquered some time ago, and the two rulers Emperor Hui-tsung and Emperor Ch’in-tsung were taken captive by the northern barbarians and ended their days in the region of Tartary. Meanwhile, Hui-tsung’s grandson, Emperor Kao-tsung, driven out of the capital K’ai-feng, established his residence in the countryside at the temporary palace at Lin-an, and for many years he did not see the capital.

In addition, the six hundred or more states of Koryo and the states of Silla and Paekche have all been conquered by the great kingdom of the Mongols, and in like manner the Mongols have even attacked the Japanese territories of Iki, Tsushima, and Kyushu. Thus the Buddha’s prediction concerning the occurrence of quarrels and disputes has proved anything but false. It is like the tides of the ocean that never fail to come when the time arrives.

In view of the accuracy of his prediction, can there be any doubt that, after this period described in the Great Collection Sutra when “the pure Law will become obscured and lost,” the great pure Law of the Lotus Sutra will be spread far and wide throughout Japan and all the other countries of Jambudvipa?

Among the Buddha’s various teachings, the Great Collection Sutra represents no more than an exposition of provisional Mahayana doctrine. In terms of teaching the way to escape from the sufferings of birth and death, it belongs to the period when the Buddha had “not yet revealed the truth,” and so cannot lead to enlightenment those who have not yet formed any connection with the Lotus Sutra. And yet in what it states concerning the six paths, the four forms of birth, and the three existences of life, it does not display the slightest error.

How, then, could there be any error in the Lotus Sutra, of which Shakyamuni Buddha said that he “now must reveal the truth”? Many Treasures Buddha likewise testified to its truth, and the Buddhas of the ten directions put forth their long broad tongues until they reached the Brahma heaven as a sign of testimony. Shakyamuni Buddha also extended his tongue, which is incapable of telling falsehoods, until it reached the highest heaven in the world of form, saying that in the last five-hundred-year period after his passing, when the entire body of Buddhist doctrine would be about to disappear, Bodhisattva Superior Practices would come forward with the five characters of Myoho-renge-kyo and administer them as good medicine to those afflicted with white leprosy—that is, persons of incorrigible disbelief and those who slander the Law. And he charged Brahma, Shakra, the gods of the sun and moon, the four heavenly kings, and the dragon deities to act as that bodhisattva’s protectors. How could these golden words of his be false? Even if the great earth were to turn upside down, a high mountain crumble and fall, summer not follow spring, the sun move eastward, or the moon fall to earth, this prediction could never fail to come true!

If that is so, then, in this time of “quarrels and disputes,” how can the ruler, the ministers, and the common people of Japan hope to escape harm when they vilify and abuse the envoy of the Buddha who is attempting to spread the Law of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, send him into exile, and attack and beat him, or inflict all kinds of trouble upon his disciples and followers? Ignorant people must surely think when I
say this that I am merely calling down
curses upon the people.
A person who spreads the Lotus
Sutra is father and mother to all the
living beings in Japan. For, as the Great
Teacher Chang-an says, “One who rids
the offender of evil is acting as his
parent.”61 If so, then I, Nichiren, am
the father and mother of the present
emperor of Japan, and the teacher and
lord of the Nembutsu believers, the
Zen followers, and the True Word
priests.
And yet, from the ruler on down to
the common people, all treat me with
enmity. How, then, can the gods of the
sun and moon go on shining down
on their heads, and how can the gods
of the earth continue to support their
feet? When Devadatta attacked the
Buddha, the earth shook and trembled,
and flames shot out of it. When King
Dammira cut off the head of the Ven-
erable Aryasimha, his own right arm
that held the sword dropped off and fell
to the ground.62 Emperor Hui-tsung
branded the face of the priest Fa-tao
and exiled him south of the Yangtze,
but before half a year had passed, the
emperor was taken prisoner and car-
ried off by the barbarians.63 And these
attacks of the Mongols on Japan are
occurring for the same reason. Though
one were to gather together as many
soldiers as there are in the five regions
of India and surround this country
with the Iron Encircling Mountains,64
it will do no good. The people of
Japan are certain to encounter the ca-
lamity of war.
From this situation one should un-
derstand that I am in fact the votary of
the Lotus Sutra. Shakyamuni Buddha,
the lord of teachings, stated that, if
anyone should abuse or curse someone
who is spreading the Lotus Sutra in the
evil world of the latter age, that person
would be guilty of an offense that is a
hundred, thousand, ten thousand, mil-
lion times greater than if he had been
an enemy of the Buddha for the space
of an entire kalpa. And yet nowadays
the ruler and the people of Japan, fol-
lowing their personal whims, seem to
hate me even more intensely than they
would an enemy of their own parents
or one who had been a foe from their
previous lifetime, or upbraid me even
more severely than they would a traitor
or a murderer. I wonder that the earth
does not open up and swallow them
alive, or that thunder does not come
down from heaven and tear them apart!
Or am I perhaps not the votary of
the Lotus Sutra after all? If not, then I
am wretched indeed! What a miserable
fate, in this present life to be hounded
by everyone and never know so much
as a moment of peace, and in the next
life to fall into the evil paths of exis-
tence! If in fact I am not the votary of
the Lotus Sutra, then who will uphold
the one vehicle, the teaching of the
Lotus Sutra?
Honen urged people to discard the
Lotus Sutra, Shan-tao said that “not
even one person in a thousand” can
reach enlightenment through its teach-
ings, and Tao-ch’o said that “not a sin-
gle person has ever attained Buddha-
hood” through that sutra. Are these
men, then, the votaries of the Lotus
Sutra? The Great Teacher Kobo said
that one who practices the Lotus Sutra
is following “a childish theory.”65 Is he
perhaps the votary of the Lotus Sutra?
The Lotus Sutra speaks of a person
who “can uphold this sutra”66 or who
“can preach this sutra.”67 What does it
mean when it speaks of someone who
“can preach” this sutra? Does it not
mean someone who will proclaim, in
the words of the Lotus Sutra itself, that
“among the sutras, it holds the highest
place,”68 and who will maintain its
superiority over the Mahavairochana,
Flower Garland, Nirvana, Wisdom, and
other sutras? Is this not the kind of
person the sutra means when it speaks
of the votary of the Lotus Sutra? If
these passages from the sutra are to be believed, then in the seven hundred and more years since Buddhism was introduced to Japan, there has never been a single votary of the Lotus Sutra other than the Great Teacher Dengyo and I, Nichiren.

Again and again I wonder that the persons who attack me do not, as the Lotus Sutra says, suffer the punishment of having their "heads split into seven pieces" or their "mouths closed and stopped up," but I realize there are reasons. Such punishments are no more than trivial penalties fit to be inflicted where there are only one or two offenders. But I, Nichiren, am the foremost votary of the Lotus Sutra in the entire land of Jambudvipa. Therefore, people who ally themselves with those who slander me or treat me with malice deserve to meet with the greatest difficulties in Jambudvipa, such as the immense earthquake that rocked Japan in the Shoka era, or the huge comet that appeared as a punishment upon the entire land in the Bun’ei era. Just look at these happenings! Though in the centuries since the Buddha’s passing there have been other practitioners of Buddhism who were treated with malice, great disasters such as these have never been known before. That is because there has never before been anyone who taught the people at large to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo! With respect to this virtue, is there anyone in the whole world who dares to face me and say he is my equal, anyone within the four seas who dares to claim he can stand side by side with me?

Question: During the Former Day of the Law, the capacities of the people may have been somewhat inferior to those of the people who lived when the Buddha was in the world. And yet they were surely much superior to those of the people in the Middle and Latter Days of the Law. How then can you say that in the early years of the Former Day of the Law the Lotus Sutra was ignored? It was during the thousand years of the Former Day of the Law that such men as Ashvaghosha, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, and Asanga appeared. Bodhisattva Vasubandhu, who is known as the scholar of a thousand works, wrote The Treatise on the Lotus Sutra, in which he declared that the Lotus is first among all the sutras. The Triпитака Master Paramartha, in describing the transmission of the Lotus Sutra, says that in India there were more than fifty scholars who spread the teachings of the Lotus Sutra, and that Vasubandhu was one of them. Such was the situation in the Former Day of the Law.

Turning to the Middle Day of the Law that followed, we find that the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai appeared in China around the middle of the period and completed The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra, The Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra, and Great Concentration and Insight in thirty volumes, in which he explored all the depths of meaning in the Lotus Sutra. At the end of the Middle Day of the Law, the Great Teacher Dengyo appeared in Japan. He not only transmitted to our country the two doctrines of perfect wisdom and perfect meditation expounded by the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai, but also established a great ordination platform of the perfect and immediate enlightenment on Mount Hiei. Thus the perfect precepts were acknowledged throughout Japan, and everyone from the ruler on down to the common people looked up to Enryaku-ji temple on Mount Hiei as their guide and teacher. How then can you say that in the Middle Day of the Law the teachings of the Lotus Sutra were not widely disseminated and spread abroad?

Answer: It is a commonly accepted assertion among the scholars of our times that the Thus Come One invariably preached his teachings in accor-
dance with the capacities of his listeners. But in fact this is not how the Buddha truly taught. If it were true that the greatest doctrines were always preached for the persons with the most superior capacities and understanding, then why, when the Buddha first achieved enlightenment, did he not preach the Lotus Sutra? Why, during the first five hundred years of the Former Day of the Law, were the teachings of the Mahayana sutras not spread abroad? And if it were true that the finest doctrines are revealed to those who have a particular connection with the Buddha, then why did Shakyamuni Buddha preach the Meditation on the Buddha Sutra for his father, King Shuddhodana, and the Maya Sutra for his mother, Lady Maya, [rather than the Lotus Sutra]? And if the reverse were true, namely, that secret doctrines should never be revealed to evil people having no connection with the Buddha or to slanderers of Buddhism, then why did the monk Realization of Virtue teach the Nirvana Sutra to all the countless monks who were guilty of breaking the precepts? Or why did Bodhisattva Never Disparaging address the four kinds of believers, who were slanderers of the Law, and propagate to them the teachings of the Lotus Sutra?

Thus we can see that it is a great mistake to assert that the teachings are invariably expounded according to the listeners’ capacities.

Question: Do you mean to say that Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, and the others did not teach the true meaning of the Lotus Sutra?

Answer: That is correct. They did not teach it.

Question: Then what doctrines did they teach?

Answer: They taught the doctrines of provisional Mahayana, the various exoteric and esoteric teachings such as the Flower Garland, Correct and Equal, Wisdom, and Mahavairochana sutras, but they did not teach the doctrines of the Lotus Sutra.

Question: How do you know that this is so?

Answer: The treatises written by Bodhisattva Nagarjuna run to some three hundred thousand verses. Not all of them have been transmitted to China and Japan, so it is difficult to make statements about their true nature. However, examining the ones that have been transmitted to China such as Commentary on the Ten Stages Sutra, The Treatise on the Middle Way, and The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom, we may surmise that the treatises remaining in India are of a similar nature.

Question: Among the treatises remaining in India, are there any that are superior to the ones transmitted to China?

Answer: There is no need for me to make pronouncements of my own on the subject of Bodhisattva Nagarjuna. For the Buddha himself predicted that after he had passed away a man called Bodhisattva Nagarjuna would appear in southern India, and that his most important teachings would be found in a work called Treatise on the Middle Way.72

Such was the Buddha’s prediction. Accordingly, we find that there were seventy scholars in India who followed in the wake of Nagarjuna, all of them major scholars. And all of these seventy scholars took Treatise on the Middle Way as the basis of their teachings. Treatise on the Middle Way is a work in four volumes and twenty-seven chapters, and the core of its teachings is expressed in a four-phrase verse73 that describes the nature of phenomena arising from dependent origination. This four-phrase verse sums up the four teachings and three truths contained in the Flower Garland, Wisdom, and other sutras. It does not express the three truths as revealed and unified in the Lotus Sutra.

Question: Is there anyone else who thinks the way you do in this matter?
THE SELECTION OF THE TIME

Answer: T’ien-t’ai says, “Do not presume to compare *Treatise on the Middle Way* [to the teachings of the Lotus Sutra].” And elsewhere he says, “Vasubandhu and Nagarjuna clearly perceived the truth in their hearts, but they did not teach it. Instead, they employed the provisional Mahayana teachings, which were suited to the times.” Miao-lo remarks, “For demolishing false opinions and establishing the truth, nothing can compare to the Lotus Sutra.” And Ts’ung-i states, “Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu cannot compare with T’ien-t’ai.”

Question: In the latter part of the T’ang dynasty, the Tripitaka Master Pu-k’ung introduced to China a treatise in one volume entitled *The Treatise on the Mind Aspiring for Enlightenment*, whose authorship he ascribed to Bodhisattva Nagarjuna. The Great Teacher Kobo says of it, “This treatise represents the heart and core of all the thousand treatises of Nagarjuna.” What is your opinion on this?

Answer: This treatise consists of seven leaves. There are numerous places in it that could not be the words of Nagarjuna. Therefore, in the catalog of Buddhist texts it is sometimes listed as a work of Nagarjuna and sometimes as a work of Pu-k’ung. The matter of its authorship has never been resolved. In addition, it is not a summation of the lifetime teachings of the Buddha and contains many loose statements. To begin with, a vital passage, the one asserting that “only in the True Word teachings [can one attain Buddhahood in one’s present form],” is in error, since it denies the fact that the Lotus Sutra enables one to attain Buddhahood in one’s present form, a fact well attested by both scriptural passages and actual events. Instead it asserts that the True Word sutras enable one to attain Buddhahood in one’s present form, an assertion for which there is not the slightest proof in scriptural passages or actual events. That one word “only” in the assertion that “only in the True Word teachings [can one attain Buddhahood in one’s present form]” is the greatest error of all.

In view of the facts, it seems likely that the work was written by Pu-k’ung himself who, in order to ensure that the people of the time would regard it with sufficient gravity, attributed it to Nagarjuna.

Pu-k’ung makes a number of other errors as well. Thus, in his translation *The Rules of Rituals Based on the Lotus Sutra*, which deals with the Lotus Sutra, he defines the Buddha of the “Life Span” chapter as the Buddha Amida, an obvious and glaring mistake. He also claims that the “Dharani” chapter of the Lotus Sutra should follow immediately after the “Supernatural Powers” chapter and that the “Entrustment” chapter should come at the very end, views that are not even worth discussing.

That is not all. He stole the Mahayana precepts from the T’ien-t’ai school and, obtaining support in the form of a command from Emperor Tai-tsung, established them in the five temples on Mount Wu-t’ai. And he decreed that the classification of doctrinal tenets used by the T’ien-t’ai school should be adopted for the True Word school as well. On the whole, he did many things to confuse and mislead the world. It is acceptable to use translations of sacred texts by other persons, but translations of sutras or treatises from the hand of Pu-k’ung are not to be trusted.

When both old and new translations are taken into consideration, we find that there are 186 persons who have brought sutras and treatises from India and introduced them to China in translation. With the exception of one man, the Tripitaka Master Kumarajiva, all of these translators have made errors of some kind. But among them, Pu-
k'ung is remarkable for the large number of his errors. It is clear that he deliberately set out to confuse and mislead others.

Question: How do you know that the translators other than Kumarajiva made errors? Do you mean not only to destroy the Zen, Nembutsu, True Word, and the others of the seven major schools, but to discredit all the works of the translators that have been introduced to China and Japan?

Answer: This is a highly confidential matter, and I should discuss it in detail only when I am face to face with the inquirer. However, I will make a few comments here. Kumarajiva himself said: “When I examine the various sutras in use in China, I find that all of them differ from the Sanskrit originals. How can I make people understand this? I have only one great wish. My body is unclean, for I have taken a wife. But my tongue alone is pure and could never speak false words concerning the teachings of Buddhism. After I die, make certain that I am cremated. If at that time my tongue is consumed by the flames, then you may discard all the sutras that I have translated.” Such were the words that he spoke again and again from his lecture platform. As a result, everyone from the ruler on down to the common people hoped they would not die before Kumarajiva [so that they might see what happened].

Eventually Kumarajiva died and was cremated, and his impure body was completely reduced to ashes. Only his tongue remained, resting atop a blue lotus that had sprung up in the midst of the flames. It sent out shining rays of five-colored light that made the night as bright as day and in the daytime outshone the rays of the sun. This, then, is why the sutras translated by all the other scholars came to be held in little esteem, while those translated by Kumarajiva, particularly his translation of the Lotus Sutra, spread rapidly throughout China.

Question: That tells us about the translators who lived at the time of Kumarajiva or before. But what about later translators such as Shan-wu-wei or Pu-k'ung?

Answer: Even in the case of translators who lived after Kumarajiva, if their tongues burned up when they were cremated, it means that there are errors in their work. The Dharma Characteristics school in earlier times enjoyed a great popularity in Japan. But the Great Teacher Dengyo attacked it, pointing out that, though the tongue of Kumarajiva was not consumed by the flames, those of Hsüan-tsang and Tz'u-en burned along with their bodies. Emperor Kammu, impressed by his argument, transferred his allegiance to the Tendai Lotus school.

In the third and ninth volumes of the Nirvana Sutra, we find the Buddha predicting that when his teachings are transmitted from India to other countries many errors will be introduced into them, and the chances for people to gain enlightenment through them will be reduced. Therefore, the Great Teacher Miao-lo remarks: “Whether or not the teachings are grasped correctly depends upon the persons who transmit them. It is not determined by the sage’s original pronouncements.”

He is saying that no matter how the people of today may follow the teachings of the sutras in hopes of a better life in the hereafter, if the sutras they follow are in error, then they can never attain enlightenment. But that is not to be attributed to any fault of the Buddha.

In studying the teachings of Buddhism, apart from the distinctions between Hinayana and Mahayana, provisional and true, and exoteric and esoteric teachings, this question of the reliability of the sutra translation is the most important of all.
Question: You say that during the thousand years of the Former Day of the Law scholars knew in their hearts that the truth of the Lotus Sutra far surpassed the teachings of the other exoteric and esoteric sutras, but that they did not proclaim this fact to others, merely teaching the doctrines of the provisional Mahayana. This may be the case, though I find it difficult to agree.

Around the middle of the thousand years of the Middle Day of the Law, the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai Chih-che appeared. In the ten volumes or thousand leaves of his Profound Meaning, he discussed in detail the meaning of the five characters composing the title of the Lotus Sutra, Myoho-renge-kyo. In the ten volumes of his Words and Phrases, he discussed each word and phrase of the sutra, from the opening words, “This is what I heard,” through the very last words, “they bowed in obeisance and departed.” He interpreted them in the light of four guidelines, namely, causes and conditions, correlated teachings, the theoretical and essential teachings, and the observation of the mind, once more devoting a thousand leaves to the discussion.

In the twenty volumes composing these two works, Profound Meaning and Words and Phrases, he likened the teachings of all the other sutras to streams and rivers, and the Lotus Sutra to the great ocean. He demonstrated that the waters that make up the Buddhist teachings of all the worlds of the ten directions flow, without the loss of a single drop, into that great ocean of the Lotus Sutra. In addition, he examined all the doctrines of the great scholars of India, not overlooking a single point, as well as the doctrines of the ten teachers of northern and southern China, refuting those that deserved to be refuted and adopting those that were worthy of acceptance. In addition to the works just mentioned, he also expounded Great Concentration and Insight in ten volumes, in which he summed up the Buddha’s lifetime teachings on meditation in the concept of a single moment of life, and encompassed all the living beings and their environments of the Ten Worlds in the concept of three thousand realms.

The pronouncements found in these works of T'ien-t'ai surpass those of all the scholars who lived in India during the thousand years of the Former Day of the Law, and are superior to the commentaries of the teachers who lived in China during the five hundred years preceding T'ien-t'ai. Therefore, the Great Teacher Chi-tsong of the Three Treatises school wrote a letter urging a hundred or more of the leaders and elders of the schools of northern and southern China to attend the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai's lectures on the sutras. “What happens only once in a thousand years, what takes place only once in five hundred years, has happened today,” he wrote. “Nan-yüeh with his superior sagesness, T'ien-t'ai with his clear wisdom—long ago they received and upheld the Lotus Sutra with body, mouth, and mind, and now they have appeared once again as these two honored teachers. Not only have they caused the sweet dew of amrita to fall in the land of China, but indeed, they have made the drums of the Law thunder even as far away as India. They possess the wonderful enlightenment that comes with inborn understanding, and their expositions of the sacred texts truly are unparalleled since the time of the Wei and Chin dynasties. Therefore, I wish to go with a hundred or more priests of the meditational practice and beg to receive the lectures of the Great Teacher Chih-che.”

The Discipline Master Tao-hsian of Mount Chung-nan praised the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai by saying: “His thorough understanding of the Lotus Sutra is like the noonday sun shining down into the darkest valley; his ex-
position of the Mahayana teachings is like a powerful wind roaring at will through the great sky. Though the teachers of words and phrases might gather by the thousands and attempt to inquire into his wondrous arguments, they could never understand them all. ... His teachings are as clear as a finger pointing at the moon ... and their essence returns to the ultimate truth.  

The Great Teacher Fa-tsang of the Flower Garland school praised T’ien-t’ai in these words: “Men like Nan-yüeh and [T’ien-t’ai] Chih-che can understand the truth through intuition, and in practice have already ascended to the first stage of security. They recall the teachings of the Law as they heard them on Eagle Peak and present them that way today.”

There is an account of how the Tripitaka Master Pu-k’ung of the True Word school and his disciple Han-kwang both abandoned the True Word school and became followers of the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai. The Biographies of Eminent Priests states: “When I [Han-kuang] was traveling in India together with the Tripitaka Master Pu-k’ung, a monk said to him, ‘In the land of China there are the teachings of T’ien-t’ai, which are most suitable in helping distinguish correct from incorrect doctrines and illuminating what is partial and what is perfect. Would it not be well to translate these writings and bring them here to this country?’”

This story was related by Han-kwang to the Great Teacher Miao-lo. When he heard the story, Miao-lo exclaimed: “Does this not mean that Buddhism has been lost in India, the country of its origin, and must now be sought in the surrounding regions? But even in China there are few people who recognize the greatness of T’ien-t’ai’s teachings. They are like the people of Lu.”

Now if there had been any major treatises in India that could compare to these three works in thirty volumes by T’ien-t’ai, then why would the Indian monk have asked that T’ien-t’ai’s commentaries be brought from China? In view of all this, how can you deny that during the Middle Day of the Law the true meaning of the Lotus Sutra was made clear, and that the widespread proclamation and propagation of its teachings was accomplished throughout the southern continent of Jambudvipa?

Answer: The Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai preached and spread throughout China a perfect meditation and perfect wisdom surpassing the lifetime teachings of the Buddha that had never been preached previously by any of the scholars in the fourteen hundred or more years since the Buddha’s passing, that is, in the thousand years of the Former Day of the Law and the first four hundred years of the Middle Day. His fame even reached as far as India. This would seem to resemble the widespread proclaiming and propagating of the Lotus Sutra. But at this time an ordination platform of the perfect and immediate enlightenment had not yet been established. Instead, T’ien-t’ai’s disciples followed the Hinayana precepts, which were grafted onto the perfect wisdom and perfect meditation—a rather ineffectual combination. It was like the sun in eclipse or the moon when it is less than full.

Whatever you may say, the time of the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai corresponds to the period described in the Great Collection Sutra as the age of reading, reciting, and listening. The time had not yet come for broadly proclaiming and propagating the Lotus Sutra.

Question: The Great Teacher Den-gyo was born in Japan in the time of Emperor Kammu. He refuted the mistaken beliefs that had held sway in Japan for the more than two hundred years since the time of Emperor Kim-
mei and declared his support for the perfect wisdom and perfect meditation taught by the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai. In addition, he repudiated as invalid the ordination platforms that had been established at three places in Japan to confer the Hinayana precepts brought over by the Reverend Ganjin, and instead set up a Mahayana specific ordination platform of the perfect and immediate enlightenment on Mount Hiei. This was the most momentous event that had ever taken place in India, China, Japan, or anywhere else in Jambudvipa during the eighteen hundred years following the Buddha's passing.

I do not know whether the Great Teacher Dengyo's inner enlightenment was inferior or equal to that of Nagarjuna and T'ien-t'ai, but I am convinced that, in calling upon all Buddhist believers to adhere to a single doctrine, he showed himself to be superior to Nagarjuna and Vasubandhu and to surpass even Nan-yüeh and T'ien-t'ai.

In general, we may say that during the eighteen hundred years following the passing of the Buddha these two men, T'ien-t'ai and Dengyo, were the true votaries of the Lotus Sutra. Thus Dengyo writes in his work The Outstanding Principles of the Lotus Sutra: “The sutra says, 'If you were to seize Mount Sumeru and fling it far off to the measureless Buddha lands, that too would not be difficult. . . . But if after the Buddha has entered extinction, in the time of evil, you can preach this sutra, that will be difficult indeed!'” In commenting on this passage, I have this to say: Shakyamuni taught that the shallow is easy to embrace, but the profound is difficult. To discard the shallow and seek the profound is the way of a person of courage. The Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai trusted and obeyed Shakyamuni and worked to uphold the Lotus school, spreading its teachings throughout China. We of Mount Hiei inherited the doctrine from T'ien-t'ai and work to uphold the Lotus school and to disseminate its teachings throughout Japan.”

The meaning of this passage is as follows: From the time of the Buddha’s advent in the Wise Kalpa in the ninth period of decrease, when the human life span measured a hundred years, through the fifty years of his preaching life as well as during the eighteen hundred or more years after his passing, there might actually have been a small person only five feet in height who could nevertheless lift a gold mountain 168,000 yojanas or 6,620,000 ni in height and hurl it over the Iron Encircling Mountains faster than a sparrow flies, just as he might take a one- or two-inch stone and toss it a distance of one or two cho. But even if there should have been such a person, it would be rarer still for someone to appear in the Latter Day of the Law who could expound the Lotus Sutra as the Buddha did. Yet the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai and the Great Teacher Dengyo were just such persons, able to teach it in a manner similar to the Buddha.

In India the scholars never went as far as to propagate the Lotus Sutra. In China the teachers before T'ien-t'ai either passed over it or fell short of it. As for later men such as Tz'u-en, Fa-tsong, or Shan-wu-wei, they were the kind who say that east is west or declare that heaven is earth. And these are not opinions that the Great Teacher Dengyo put forward merely to enhance his own worth.

On the nineteenth day of the first month in the twenty-first year of the Enryaku era (802), Emperor Kammu paid a visit to the temple at Mount Takao. He summoned more than ten eminent priests from the six schools and seven major temples of Nara, including Zengi, Shoyu, Hoki, Chonin, Kengyoku, Ampuku, Gonso, Shuen, Jiko, Gen’yo, Saiko, Dosho, Kosho, and
Kambin, to come to the temple to
debate with the Dharma Teacher Sai-
cho. But they became tongue-tied after
their first words and could not speak a
second or third time. Instead, all bowed
their heads as one and pressed their
palms together in a gesture of awe. The
Three Treatises teachings concerning
the two storehouses of teachings, the
teachings of the three periods and the
thrice turned wheel of the Law; the
Dharma Characteristics doctrines con-
cerning the teachings of the three pe-
riods and the five natures; and the
Flower Garland doctrines of the four
teachings, the five teachings, 92 the root
teaching and the branch teachings, the
six forms, and the ten mysteries—all
their frameworks were utterly refuted.
It was as though the beams and rafters
of a great edifice had broken and col-
lapsed. The proud banners of the ten
and more eminent priests had also been
topped.

At that time the emperor was great-
ly amazed at the proceedings, and on
the twenty-ninth day of the same
month he dispatched [Wake no] Hiro-
yo and [Otomo no] Kunimichi as im-
perial envoys to question the men of
the seven temples and six schools at
greater length. All of them in turn sub-
mitted a memorial acknowledging that
they had been defeated in the debate
and won over by Dengyo’s arguments.

“When we privately examine Profound
Meaning and other commentaries by
T’ien-t’ai, we find that they sum up all
the teachings expounded by Shakya-
muni Buddha in his lifetime. The full
purport of the Buddha’s doctrines is
made clear, without a single point be-
ing left unexplained. The Tendai school
surpasses all other schools, and is unique
in pointing out the single way for all to
follow. The doctrines that it expounds
represent the most profound mystic
truth and are something that we, stu-
dents of the seven major temples and six
schools, have never before heard of, and
never before seen. Now at last the dis-
pute that has continued so long between
the Three Treatises and Dharma Char-
acteristics schools has been resolved as
dramatically as though ice had melted.
The truth has been made abundantly
clear, as though clouds and mist had
parted to reveal the light of the sun,
moon, and stars. In the two hundred or
more years since Prince Shotoku spread
the Buddhist teachings in this country,
a great many sutras and treatises have
been lectured upon, and their principles
have been widely argued, but until now,
many doubts still remained to be settled.
Moreover, the lofty and perfect doc-
trine of the Lotus Sutra had not yet been
properly explained and made known.
Was it that the people who lived dur-
ing this period were not yet qualified to
taste its perfect flavor?

“In our humble view, the ruler 93 of
our sacred dynasty has received the
charge given long ago by the Thus
Come One Shakyamuni and has un-
dergone profound instruction in the
pure and perfect teaching of the Lo-
tus Sutra, so that the doctrines of the
unique and wonderful truth that it
expounds have for the first time been
explained and made clear. Thus we,
the scholars of the six schools, have for
the first time understood the ultimate
truth. From now on, all the beings
in this world who are endowed with
life will be able to embark on the ship
of the wonderful and perfect truth
and quickly reach the opposite shore.
Zengi and the others of our group
have met with great good fortune be-
cause of karmic bonds and have been
privileged to hear these extraordinary
words. Were it not for some profound
karmic tie, how could we have been
born in this sacred age?”

In China in past times, Chia-hsiang
assembled some hundred other priests
and, together with them, acknowl-
edged the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai to
be a true sage. And later in Japan, the
more than two hundred priests of the seven temples of Nara proclaimed the Great Teacher Dengyo to be worthy of the title of sage. Thus, during the two thousand and more years after the passing of the Buddha, these two sages appeared in the two countries of China and Japan respectively. In addition, the Great Teacher Dengyo established on Mount Hiei an ordination platform for conferring the great precepts of perfect and immediate enlightenment, precepts that even the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai had never propagated. How then can you deny that in the latter part of the Middle Day of the Law the wide proclamation and propagation of the Lotus Sutra was achieved?

Answer: As I have explained in my earlier discussion, a great truth that was not spread widely by Mahakasyapa or Ananda was in time propagated by Ashvaghosha, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, and Vasubandhu. As I have also explained in my discussion, there was a great truth that was not fully made known by Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, and the others, but was propagated by the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai. And, as I have further explained, it remained for the Great Teacher Dengyo to establish an ordination platform of the great precepts of perfect and immediate enlightenment that were not spread widely by the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai Chih-che.

And, unbelievable as it may seem, there clearly appears in the text of the Lotus Sutra a correct Law that is supremely profound and secret, one that, though expounded in full by the Buddha, in the time since his passing has never yet been propagated by Mahakasyapa, Ananda, Ashvaghosha, Nagarjuna, Asanga, or Vasubandhu, nor even by T’ien-t’ai or Dengyo. The most difficult and perplexing question is whether or not this profound Law can be broadly proclaimed and propagated throughout the entire land of Jambudvipa now at the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law, the fifth of the five five-hundred-year periods following the Buddha’s passing.

Question: What is this secret Law? First, tell me its name, and then I want to hear its meaning. If what you say is true, then perhaps Shakyaumuni Buddha will appear in the world once more, or Bodhisattva Superior Practices will once again emerge from the earth. Speak quickly, for pity’s sake!

They say that the Tripitaka Master Hsüan-tsang, after dying and being reborn six times, was finally able to reach India, where he spent nineteen years. But he claimed that the one vehicle doctrine of the Lotus Sutra was a mere expedient teaching, and that the Agama sutras of Hinayana Buddhism represented the true doctrine. And the Tripitaka Master Pu-k’ung, when he paid a return visit to India, his homeland, announced that the Buddha of the “Life Span” chapter of the Lotus Sutra was Amida! This is like saying that east is west or calling the sun the moon. They drove their bodies in vain and exerted their minds to no avail.

But fortunately, because we were born in the Latter Day of the Law, without taking a single step, we can complete [the bodhisattva practice] that requires three asamkhya kalpas, and without feeding our head to a tigress, we can obtain the unseen crown of the Buddha’s head.

Answer: This Law is revealed in the text of the Lotus Sutra, so it is an easy matter for me to explain it to you. But first, before clarifying this Law, there are three important concerns that I must mention. It is said that, no matter how vast the ocean, it will not hold within it the body of a dead person, and no matter how thick the crust of the earth, it will not support one who is undutiful to one’s parents. According to the Buddhist teaching, however, even those who commit the five cardinal sins may be saved, and even those
who are unfilial may gain salvation. It is only the icchantikas, or persons of incorrigible disbelief, those who slander the Law, and those who pretend to be foremost in observing the precepts who cannot be forgiven.

The three sources of difficulty mentioned above are the Nembutsu school, the Zen school, and the True Word school. The first, the Nembutsu school, has spread throughout Japan, and the Nembutsu is on the lips of the four categories of Buddhists. The second, the Zen school, has produced arrogant priests who talk of their three robes and one begging bowl, and who fill the area within the four seas, regarding themselves as the enlightened leaders of the whole world. The third, the True Word school, is in a class by itself. It receives support from Mount Hiei, To-ji, the seven temples of Nara, and Onjo-ji, as well as from the high priestly officials including the chief priest of Mount Hiei, the prelate of Omuro, the chief official of Onjo-ji, and supervisors of the various temples and shrines. Since the sacred mirror kept in the lady officials’ quarters of the imperial palace was destroyed by fire, the precious mudra of the Thus Come One Mahavairochana has been regarded as a mirror of the Buddha to take its place; and since the precious sword was lost in the western sea, the five honored ones of the True Word school have been looked upon as capable of cutting down the enemies of the Japanese nation. So firmly entrenched are these beliefs that, though the stone that marks the duration of a kalpa might be worn completely away, it would seem that they would never be overthrown, and though the great earth itself might turn upside down, people would never question them.

When the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai defeated in debate the leaders of the other schools of northern and southern China, the True Word school’s teachings had not yet been introduced to that country, and when the Great Teacher Dengyo won victory over the six schools of Japan, the True Word doctrines escaped refutation. On several occasions they have managed to evade their powerful opponents, and on the contrary, have succeeded in overshadowing and imperiling the great teaching of the Lotus Sutra. In addition, the Great Teacher Jikaku, who was a disciple of the Great Teacher Dengyo, went so far as to adopt the doctrines of the True Word school, obscure the Tendai doctrines of Mount Hiei, and turn the entire school into a sphere of the True Word school. But who could effectively oppose such a person of authority as Jikaku?

Thus, helped on by prejudiced views, the false doctrines of the Great Teacher Kobo continued to escape condemnation. It is true that the Reverend Annen did voice a certain opposition to Kobo. But all he did was to demote the Flower Garland Sutra from second place and substitute the Lotus Sutra for it; he still ranked the Lotus Sutra as inferior to the Mahavairochana Sutra. He was nothing more than an arranger of worldly compromises.

Question: In what way are these three schools in error?

Answer: Let us first consider the Pure Land school. In China in the time of the Ch’i dynasty, there was a priest named T’an-luan. He was originally a follower of the Three Treatises school, but when he read the treatise by Nagarjuna entitled Commentary on the Ten Stages Sutra, he espoused the two categories of the difficult-to-practice way and the easy-to-practice way. Later there was a man called the Meditation Master Tao-ch’o, who lived during the T’ang dynasty. Originally he had given lectures on the Nirvana Sutra, but when he read T’an-luan’s account of his conversion to faith in the Pure Land teachings,
Tao-ch’o abandoned the Nirvana Sutra and likewise changed over to the Pure Land faith, establishing the two categories of the Sacred Way teachings and the Pure Land teachings. In addition, Tao-ch’o had a disciple named Shan-tao who posited two types of religious practice that he called sundry practices and correct practices.

In Japan some two hundred years after the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law, in the time of the Retired Emperor Gotoba, there lived a man named Honen. Addressing his words to all priests and lay believers, he stated: “Buddhist teachings are based upon the capacities of the people of the period. The Lotus Sutra and the Mahavairochana Sutra, the doctrines of the eight or nine schools including the Tendai and True Word, the teachings of the Buddha’s lifetime—the Mahayana and Hinayana, the exoteric and esoteric, provisional and true teachings—as well as the schools based on them, were all intended for people of superior capacities and superior wisdom who lived during the two thousand years of the Former and Middle Days of the Law. Now that we have entered the Latter Day of the Law, no matter how diligently one may practice such teachings, they will bring no benefit. Moreover, if one mixes such practices with the practice of the Nembutsu addressed to the Buddha Amida, then the Nembutsu will be rendered ineffective and will not lead the believer to rebirth in the Pure Land.

“This is not something that I have taken upon myself to declare. Bodhisattva Nagarjuna and the Dharma Teacher T’an-luan both designate such practices as the difficult-to-practice way. Tao-ch’o says that not a single person ever attained enlightenment through them, and Shan-tao affirms that not even one person in a thousand can be saved by them.

“These persons whom I have quoted were all leaders of the Pure Land school, and so you may be inclined to question their words. But there is the sage of former times Eshin, unsurpassed by any wise priests of the Tendai or True Word school in the latter age. He stated in his work entitled The Essentials of Rebirth in the Pure Land that the doctrines of exoteric and esoteric Buddhism are not the kind of teaching that can free us from the sufferings of birth and death. Moreover, the work entitled The Ten Conditions for Rebirth in the Pure Land by Yokan of the Three Treatises school states the same opinion. Therefore, if people will abandon the Lotus Sutra, True Word, and other teachings and devote themselves entirely to the Nembutsu, then ten persons out of ten and a hundred persons out of a hundred will be reborn in the Pure Land.”

These pronouncements of Honen precipitated debates and disputes with the priests of Mount Hiei, To-ji, Onjo-ji, and the seven major temples of Nara. But Eshin’s words in the preface to his Essentials of Rebirth in the Pure Land appeared to be so compelling that in the end Kessen, the chief priest of Mount Hiei, surrendered to the Nembutsu doctrine and became a disciple of Honen.

In addition to that, even people who were not disciples of Honen began to recite the Nembutsu to Amida Buddha far more often than they paid reverence to any other Buddha, their mouths continually murmuring it, their minds constantly occupied with it, until it seemed that everyone throughout the country of Japan had become a follower of Honen.

In the past fifty years, every person within the four quarters of the nation has become a follower of Honen. And if everyone has become a follower of Honen, then every person in the country of Japan is a slanderer of the Law. Now, if a thousand sons or daughters should band together to murder one
parent, then all one thousand of them
would be guilty of committing the five
cardinal sins. And if one of them as a
result should fall into the Avichi hell,
then how could the others escape the
same fate?

In the end, it would seem as though
Honen, angry at having been con-
demned to exile, turned into an evil
spirit and took possession of the sover-
eign and the priests of Mount Hiei and
Onjo-ji who had earlier persecuted
him and his disciples, causing these
persons to plot rebellion or to commit
other evil acts. As a result, they were
almost all destroyed by the Kamakura
authorities in eastern Japan. The few
priests of Mount Hiei or To-ji who
managed to survive are treated with
contempt by lay men and women.
They are like performing monkeys that
are laughed at by the crowd, or subju-
gated barbarians who are despised even
by children.

The men of the Zen school, taking
advantage of this situation, pronounced
themselves observers of the precepts,
deceiving the eyes of the people and
putting on such lofty airs that, no mat-
ter what false doctrines they presumed
in their madness to put forward, these
doctrines were not recognized as erro-
nous.

This school called Zen claims to
represent a "separate transmission out-
side the sutras," which was not revealed
by Shakyamuni Buddha in the numer-
ous sutras preached during his lifetime
but was whispered in secret to the Ven-
erable Mahakashyapa. Thus the propo-
nents of this school maintain that, if
one studies the various sutras without
understanding the teachings of the Zen
school, one will be like a dog trying to
bite at a clap of thunder or a monkey
grasping at the moon's reflection in the
water.

Zen is a false doctrine that appeals to
the kind of people in Japan who have
been abandoned by their fathers and
mothers because of their lack of filial
devotion or dismissed from service by
their lords because of their outrageous
conduct, to young priests who are too
lazy to apply themselves to their stud-
ies, and to the disreputable nature of
courtesans. Even though its followers
have all embraced the precepts, they are
no more than swarming locusts feeding
upon the people of the nation. That is
why heaven glares down in anger and
the gods of the earth shudder.

The True Word school is a far
greater source of trouble than the other
two schools I have discussed above, a
major form of error, and I would there-
fore like to discuss it in outline here.

In the reign of Emperor Hsüan-
tsung of the T'ang dynasty, the Tri-
pitaka masters Shan-wu-wei, Ching-
chong-chih, and Pu-k'ung brought the
Mahavairochana, Diamond Crown, and
Susiddhikara sutras from India and in-
troduced them to China. The teachings
of these three sutras are very clearly set
forth. If we look for the basic principle,
we find that it consists in unifying the
two vehicles of voice-hearers and cause-
awakened ones in the one vehicle of
bodhisattvas and repudiating the two
vehicles to reveal the one vehicle. As
far as practices go, the school employs
mudras and mantras.

Such a doctrine cannot compare
even with the one vehicle of Buddha-
hood that is taught in contrast to the
three vehicles [of voice-hearers, cause-
awakened ones, and bodhisattvas] in the
Flower Garland and Wisdom sutras, nor
is it even as profound as the specific
teaching or the perfect teaching that
preceded the Lotus Sutra, as clarified by
the T'ien-t'ai school. In its basic mean-
ing at least, it corresponds merely to the
two lower types of teachings: the Tri-
pitaka teaching and the connecting
teaching.

The Tripitaka Master Shan-wu-wei
no doubt realized that, if he were to
expound the teachings set forth in
these sutras [he brought from India], he would be ridiculed by the men of the Flower Garland and Dharma Characteristics schools and laughed at by those of the T’ien-t’ai school. And yet, since he had gone to all the trouble of bringing these works from India, probably he did not feel inclined simply to remain silent on the matter.

At this time there was a priest of the T’ien-t’ai school called the Meditation Master I-hsing, a perverse man. Shan-wu-wei went to him and questioned him on the Buddhist doctrines taught in China. Acharya I-hsing, deceived as to his motives, not only revealed to Shan-wu-wei the main principles of the Three Treatises, Dharma Characteristics, and Flower Garland doctrines, but even explained the teachings of the T’ien-t’ai school to him.

Shan-wu-wei realized that the T’ien-t’ai teachings were even finer than he had supposed when he had heard of them in India, and that the doctrines of the three sutras he had brought could never compete with them. But he set about to deceive I-hsing, saying: “My good priest, you are one of the cleverest men of China, and the T’ien-t’ai school has a truly profound and wonderful teaching. But the True Word school whose teachings I have brought to China excels it in the fact that it employs mudras and mantras.”

I-hsing appeared to find this reasonable, and the Tripiṭaka Master Shan-wu-wei then said to him: “Just as the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai wrote commentaries on the Lotus Sutra, so I would like to compose a commentary on the Mahāvairochana Sutra in order to propagate the True Word teachings. Could you write it down for me?” I-hsing replied, “That would be easy enough.”

“But in what way should I write?” I-hsing asked, saying: “The T’ien-t’ai school is unassailable, and though each of the other schools of Buddhism has competed in trying to refute its doctrines, none has gained the slightest success because of a single point. That point is the fact that in the Immeasurable Meanings Sutra, an introductory teaching to the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha declares that in the various sutras that he has preached during the previous forty and more years he has not yet revealed the truth, thus invalidating the doctrines based upon those various sutras. And in the ‘Teacher of the Law’ and ‘Supernatural Powers’ chapters of the Lotus Sutra, the Buddha states that no sutras that will be preached in later times can ever equal the Lotus Sutra. In the passage of the ‘Teacher of the Law’ chapter concerning the comparison of the Lotus Sutra and others preached at the same time, he also makes clear the superiority of the Lotus Sutra. To which of these three categories—the sutras preached before the Lotus Sutra, those preached contemporaneously with it, or those preached later—should the Mahāvairochana Sutra be assigned?”

At that point, the Tripiṭaka Master Shan-wu-wei hit upon an exceedingly cunning idea. “The Mahāvairochana Sutra,” he explained to I-hsing, “begins with a chapter called the ‘Stage of the Mind.’ Just as in the case of the Immeasurable Meanings Sutra, which refutes all the sutras that had been preached in the previous forty and more years, this ‘Stage of the Mind’ chapter invalidates all other sutras. The remaining chapters of the Mahāvairochana Sutra, from the ‘Entering the Mandala’ chapter through the end, became known in China in two versions, the Lotus Sutra and the Mahāvairochana Sutra, though in India they constituted a single sutra. Shakya-muni Buddha, addressing Śāriputra and Maitreya, preached the Mahāvairochana Sutra, which he called the Lotus Sutra, but he omitted the explanations
of the mudras and mantras and expounded only the doctrines. This is the work that the Tripitaka Master Kumara-jiva introduced to China and that the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai employed. At the same time, however, the Thus Come One Mahavairochana, addressing Vajrasattva, preached the Lotus Sutra, which he called the Mahavairochana Sutra. This is the work now called the Mahavairochana Sutra, a work that I often saw when I was in India. Therefore, I want you to explain that the Mahavairochana Sutra and the Lotus Sutra are to be savored as works that are essentially the same in flavor, like water and milk. If you do so, then the Mahavairochana Sutra can stand superior to all the other sutras preached in the past, present, and future in the same way that the Lotus Sutra does.

"As to the mudras and mantras, if they are used to adorn the doctrine of the mind, which is expressed in the term a single moment of life comprising three thousand realms, this will constitute a secret teaching in which the three mysteries are provided. And with this doctrine containing the three mysteries, the True Word will prove superior to the T'ien-t'ai school, which speaks only of the mystery of the mind. The True Word school is like a general of the first rank who dons armor, slings his bow and arrows over his shoulder, and fastens a sword at his waist. But the T'ien-t'ai school, with nothing but the mystery of the mind, is like a general of the first rank who is stark naked."

Acharya I-hsing wrote all this down just as Shan-wu-wei dictated it.

Throughout the 360 states of China, there was no one who knew about this ruse. At first there were some disputes over the relative merits of the T'ien-t'ai and True Word teachings. But Shan-wu-wei was the kind of person who was able to command a great deal of respect, whereas the men of the T'ien-t'ai school were regarded lightly. Moreover, at this time there were no men of wisdom such as the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai had been. Thus day by day the T'ien-t'ai school lost more ground to the True Word school, and finally all debate ceased.

As more and more years have gone by, these fraudulent beginnings of the True Word school have become completely obscured and forgotten. When the Great Teacher Dengyo of Japan went to China and returned with the teachings of the T'ien-t'ai school, he also brought back the True Word teachings. The T'ien-t'ai doctrine he recommended to the emperor of Japan, but the True Word teachings he turned over to the eminent priests of the six schools to study. Dengyo had already established the superiority of the T'ien-t'ai teachings over those of the six schools before he went to China. After he came back from China, he attempted to establish an ordination platform for conferring the precepts of perfect and immediate enlightenment, but this involved him in a great deal of controversy. He had many enemies and probably felt that establishing the ordination platform would be difficult enough to accomplish even if he devoted all his efforts to it. Or perhaps he felt that the refutation of the True Word teachings should be left until the Latter Day of the Law. In any event, he did not discuss the True Word teachings in the presence of the emperor, or make any clear pronouncement on the matter to his disciples. However, he did leave a one-volume secret work entitled A Clarification of the Schools Based on T'ien-t'ai's Doctrine, in which he describes how various priests of the seven schools were won over to T'ien-t'ai's teachings. In the preface to that work, he mentions the fraudulence of the True Word teachings.

The Great Teacher Kobo went to T'ang China during the Enryaku era, when the Great Teacher Dengyo
went. There he studied the teachings of the True Word school under Hui-kuo of the temple called Ch'ing-lung-ssu. After returning to Japan, he pronounced judgment on the relative merits of the doctrines preached by Shakyamuni in the course of his life, declaring that the True Word teachings ranked first, the Flower Garland second, and those of the Lotus Sutra third.

The Great Teacher Kobo enjoys a quite unusual amount of respect among the people of our time. However, although I hesitate to touch on such matters, in questions of the Buddhist teaching, he committed a rather unusual number of errors. If we stop to consider the matter in general, it would appear that when he went to China he merely learned the ritual mudras and mantras that are used by the True Word school and introduced these to Japan. But he does not seem to have delved into the doctrines of the school to any great extent. After he returned to Japan and observed the situation at the time, he saw that the Tendai school was flourishing to an unusual degree, and he concluded that it would be difficult to propagate the True Word doctrines that he himself adhered to. Therefore, he adopted the viewpoint of the Flower Garland school, whose doctrines he had studied earlier in Japan, declaring that the Flower Garland Sutra was superior to the Lotus Sutra. But he realized that, if he simply asserted the superiority of the Flower Garland Sutra over the Lotus Sutra in the same manner as the Flower Garland school, people would not be likely to pay much heed to his words. He consequently gave a new twist to the Flower Garland doctrine, declaring that his argument represented the true intent of the Mahavairochana Sutra, *Mind Aspiring for Enlightenment* by Bodhisattva Nagarjuna, and Shan-wu-wei, thus bolstering his position with absurd falsehoods. And yet the followers of the Tendai school failed to speak out strongly against him.

Question: In his *Treatise on the Ten Stages of the Mind, The Precious Key to the Secret Treasury*, and *A Comparison of Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism*, the Great Teacher Kobo makes such statements as: “Each vehicle that is put forward is claimed to be the vehicle of Buddhahood, but when examined from a later stage, they are all seen to be mere childish theory”;

“As the various exoteric Mahayana sutras such as the Lotus Sutra are comparable to the fourth flavor, that of butter”;

“The Buddhist teachers of China vied with one another to steal the ghee [or True Word] and claim that it is the possession of their own school.” What are we to make of such statements put forth in these commentaries?

Answer: I have been greatly astonished at the statements in these commentaries and have accordingly searched through the various sutras, including the three attributed to the Thus Come One Mahavairochana. But I do not find a single word or phrase in the sutras to indicate that, in comparison to the Flower Garland and Mahavairochana sutras, the Lotus Sutra is mere “childish theory,” that with regard to the Six Paramitas Sutra T’ien-t’ai acted as a thief, or that the Protection Sutra describes Shakyamuni Buddha as being “in the region of darkness.” These are all utterly ridiculous assertions. And yet for the past three hundred or four hundred years, a sufficiently large number of intelligent persons in Japan accepted them, so that they have now come to be looked upon as perfectly reasonable and well founded. I would like for a moment, therefore, to discuss some of the more patently false opinions put forth by Kobo and point out other absurdities in his thinking.
It was during the period of the Ch‘en and Sui dynasties that the Great Teacher T‘ien-t‘ai likened the Lotus Sutra to ghee, the finest flavor. It was [some two hundred years] later, in the middle years of the T‘ang dynasty, that the Tripitaka Master Prajna translated the Six Paramitas Sutra and introduced it to China. Only if the Six Paramitas Sutra—which compares the dharani teachings to ghee—had existed in China during the Ch‘en and Sui dynasties would it make any sense to claim that the Great Teacher T‘ien-t‘ai “stole the ghee of the True Word teachings.”

A similar example exists in the case of the priest Tokuitsu of Japan. He bitterly criticized the Great Teacher T‘ien-t‘ai for rejecting the doctrine of the teachings of the three periods that is set forth in the Profound Secrets Sutra, declaring that T‘ien-t‘ai had used his three-inch tongue to destroy the Buddha’s five-foot body. The Great Teacher Dengyo in turn attacked Tokuitsu, pointing out that the Profound Secrets Sutra was first introduced to China by Hsüan-tsang in the early decades of the T‘ang dynasty. In other words, it was brought to the country a number of years after T‘ien-t‘ai Chih-che, who lived during the Ch‘en and Sui, had already passed away. How then could he have rejected a doctrine that was not introduced to China until the period after his passing? Faced with such an argument, not only was Tokuitsu reduced to silence, but his tongue broke into eight pieces, and he died.

But this is nothing compared to the evil accusations made by Kobo. In his writings he labels as thieves Fa-tsang of the Flower Garland school, Chia-hsiang of the Three Treatises, Hsüan-tsang of the Dharma Characteristics, and T‘ien-t‘ai, as well as other various Buddhist leaders of northern and southern China, and in fact all the Tripitaka masters and Buddhist teachers who have lived since the time when Buddhism was first introduced to China in the Later Han.

In addition, it should be noted that likening the Lotus Sutra to ghee was by no means a comparison invented by T‘ien-t‘ai on his own initiative. The Buddha himself said in the Nirvana Sutra that the Lotus Sutra is like ghee, and later Bodhisattva Vasubandhu wrote that the Lotus Sutra and the Nirvana Sutra are comparable to ghee. And Bodhisattva Nagarjuna terms the Lotus Sutra a “wonderful medicine.” So if one who compares the Lotus Sutra to ghee is a thief, then are not Shakyamuni, Many Treasures, the Buddhas of the ten directions, Nagarjuna, and Vasubandhu thieves?

Though Kobo’s disciples and the True Word priests of To-ji temple in Japan may be so poor-sighted that they cannot distinguish black from white with their own eyes, they should trust the sight of others and recognize the misfortunes invited by their own faults. Moreover, where are the precise passages in the Mahavairochana and Diamond Crown sutras that refer to the Lotus Sutra as a “childish theory”? Let them produce them! Even if these sutras should perhaps refer to the Lotus Sutra in those terms, it may quite possibly be an error in translation. Such matters should be examined with great care and attention before they are put forward.

We are told that Confucius thought nine times before saying one word, and that Tan, the Duke of Chou, would bind up his hair three times in the course of washing it and spit out his food three times in the course of a meal [in order not to keep callers waiting]. Thus we see that, even among the men depicted in the non-Buddhist writings who studied ephemeral, worldly affairs, those who were wise proceeded with great caution. How then
can men like Kobo be so careless and shallow in judgment in matters pertaining to the Law?

Such erroneous views of Kobo’s were handed down until they reached Shokaku-bo, the founder of a temple called Dembo-in, who stated in his Rules of Rites for Revering the Buddha’s Relics: “The figure worthy of true respect is the Buddha of the Nondual Mahayana. The three-bodied donkey- or ox-Buddha is not even fit to draw his carriage. The truly profound doctrines are the teachings of the twofold mandala. The teachers of the four doctrines of the exoteric vehicles are not worthy even to tend the sandals of those who teach the mandala!”

The “teachers of the four doctrines of the exoteric vehicles” means the priests who teach the Dharma Characteristics, Three Treatises, Flower Garland, and Lotus doctrines, and the “three-bodied donkey- or ox-Buddha” means the four Buddhas, the lords of the teachings of the Lotus, Flower Garland, Wisdom, and Profound Secrets sutras. It is saying that these Buddhas and priests are not even worthy to act as ox-drivers or sandal-tenders for such True Word teachers as Kobo or Shokaku-bo.

There was a man in India known as the Great Arrogant Brahman who was born with innate wisdom and was widely read. Both the exoteric and the esoteric teachings of Buddhism were stored up in his breast, and he had both the Buddhist and the non-Buddhist writings in the palm of his hand. Even the king and his ministers bowed their heads before him, and the common people looked up to him as a teacher and guide. But in the excess of his arrogance, he went so far as to make himself a dais supported by four legs representing the deities Maheshvara, Vishnu, and Narayana, along with the World-Honored One of Great Enlightenment, four sages whom the world holds in great honor, seating himself on it when he expounded his doctrines. He was like the True Word priests of our time when they spread their mandala with its representations of Shakyamuni and the other various Buddhas and perform their ceremony of anointment, or like the Zen priests when they declare that the teachings of their school represent a great Law that steps upon the head of the Buddha.

At this time there was a humble monk called the Scholar Bhadraruchi who declared that the Brahman should be corrected, but neither the ruler and high ministers nor the common people would listen to such a suggestion. In the end, the Brahman charged his disciples and lay supporters to go about spreading countless falsehoods and abusing and beating Bhadraruchi. But Bhadraruchi, disregarding the danger to his life, continued to denounce the Brahman until the ruler, coming to hate Bhadraruchi, arranged for him to debate with the Brahman in hopes of silencing him. Contrary to his expectations, however, the Brahman was the one defeated in the debate.

The king looked up to heaven, then threw himself upon the ground lamenting, and said, “I have been privileged to hear your words on this matter firsthand and to free myself from my erroneous views. But my father, the former king, was completely deceived by this man and by now has probably fallen into the Avichi hell!” So saying, he clung to the knees of the Scholar Bhadraruchi and wept in sorrow.

At Bhadraruchi’s suggestion, the Brahman was placed on the back of a donkey so that he might be led in disgrace throughout India and shown to all. But the evil in his heart only grew stronger than ever, and in his living form he fell into the hell of incessant suffering. Was he any different from the followers of the True Word
and Zen schools in the world today?

The Chinese Meditation Master San-chieh stated that the Lotus Sutra, which represents the teachings of the Buddha Shakyamuni, is a doctrine suited for the first and second stages of Buddhism, which correspond to the Former and Middle Days of the Law. For the Latter Day of the Law, however, he asserted that one should adopt the "universal teaching" that he himself had set forth. He declared that, if one should try to practice the Lotus Sutra in these present times, one would surely fall into the great Avichi hells of the ten directions because its teachings do not accord with the nature and capabilities of the people of the latter age.

He carried out prostrations and penances at the proper hours six times each day and observed the four daily meditation periods, conducting himself like a living Buddha. Many people paid him honor, and his disciples numbered more than ten thousand. But one young woman dared to recite the Lotus Sutra and to censure him for his doctrines. As a result, he lost his voice on the spot and was reborn as a huge snake that devoured a number of his disciples and lay supporters, as well as girls and young women. And now Shan-tao and Honen, with their pernicious doctrine that not even one person in a thousand can be saved by the Lotus Sutra, are just like this man San-chieh.

Many years have passed now since these great sources of trouble, the Nembutsu, Zen, and True Word teachings, came into existence, and one should not underestimate their influence. But I feel that, if I speak out against them in this way, there will perhaps be those who will heed my words.

And yet there is something that is more evil than these three teachings, so evil that it is a hundred, thousand, ten thousand, million times more difficult to believe. Though the Great Teacher Jikaku was the third disciple of the Great Teacher Dengyo, everyone from the ruler on down to the common people believed him to be a more outstanding person than the Great Teacher Dengyo himself. He made an exhaustive study of the teachings of the True Word school and of the Lotus school, and stated in his writings that the True Word teachings are superior to those of the Lotus Sutra. As a result, the community of priests on Mount Hiei, which numbered three thousand, as well as the Buddhist scholars in every province throughout Japan, all came to accept his opinion on this matter.

The followers of Kobo had thought that, although he was their teacher, he had perhaps gone too far when he declared the Lotus Sutra inferior to the Flower Garland Sutra. But when they saw that the Great Teacher Jikaku put forth a similar opinion in his exegetical writings, they took it as an accepted fact that the True Word teachings were indeed superior to the Lotus Sutra.

Mount Hiei ought to have been the staunchest opponent to this opinion established in Japan that the True Word teachings are superior to the Lotus Sutra. Yet Jikaku silenced the mouths of the three thousand priests of Mount Hiei and prevented them from speaking out, and as a result, the True Word school was able to have its way. In effect, the Great Teacher Jikaku was the foremost ally of To-ji, the leading temple of the True Word school.

Though the Pure Land and Zen schools may have flourished in other countries, they would never have been able to spread throughout Japan in countless kalpas if Enryaku-ji temple on Mount Hiei had not given its assent. But the Reverend Annen, known as the first worthy of Mount Hiei, wrote a work called Different Views on the Teaching and the Time, in which he ranked the nine schools of Buddhism in the order of their superiority, plac-
ing the True Word school in the first place, the Zen school in the second, the Tendai Lotus school in the third, the Flower Garland school in the fourth, and so forth.\textsuperscript{127} Because of this egregious error in interpretation, the Zen school has been able to spread its teachings throughout Japan, bringing the country to the brink of ruin. And Honen was able to propagate the teachings of the Nembutsu school, similarly causing the nation to be imperiled as a result of the opinions first put forth by Eshin in the preface to his \textit{Essentials of Rebirth in the Pure Land}. The Buddha tells us that only the worms born from the body of the lion itself feed on the lion. How true are those words!

The Great Teacher Dengyo spent a period of fifteen years in Japan studying the Tendai and True Word doctrines on his own. He was endowed by nature with a wonderful degree of understanding, and without the aid of a teacher realized the truth. But in order to dispel the doubts of the world, he journeyed to China, where he received instruction in the teachings of the T'ien-t'ai and True Word schools. The scholars in China held various opinions, but Dengyo believed in his heart that the Lotus Sutra was superior to the True Word teachings. Therefore, he did not use the word “school” when referring to the True Word school, but simply spoke of the “concentration and insight” and “True Word” practices of the Tendai school. He decreed that two priests should be ordained each year and should spend a period of twelve years in study on Mount Hiei. In addition, he received an imperial edict designating the Lotus, Golden Light, and Benevolent Kings sutras as the three scriptures for the protection of the nation and decreeing that they be read and recited in Shikan-in.\textsuperscript{128} It went on to liken these three sutras to the three treasures of the imperial house-hold, the eternal and foremost treasures of the Japanese nation, which are the sacred jewel, the sacred sword, and the sacred mirror. After Dengyo's passing, the first chief priest of the Tendai school on Mount Hiei, the Reverend Gishin, and the second chief priest, the Great Teacher Encho, carried on Dengyo's intentions without any deviation.

The third chief priest, the Great Teacher Jikaku, also went to T'ang China, where he spent ten years studying the relative merits of the exoteric and esoteric teachings under eight distinguished priests.\textsuperscript{129} He also studied under priests of the T'ien-t'ai school such as Kuang-hsiu and Wei-chüan.\textsuperscript{130} But in his heart he believed that the True Word school was superior to the T'ien-t'ai school. He felt that his teacher, the Great Teacher Dengyo, had not gone into the matter in sufficient detail, that he had not remained for an extended period in China and hence had acquired only a rough understanding of the True Word doctrines.

After Jikaku returned to Japan, he founded a great lecture hall called Soji-in west of Shikan-in in the Toto area\textsuperscript{131} on Mount Hiei, in which he established the Thus Come One Mahavairohana of the Diamond Realm as an object of devotion. In front of this image, he composed, on the basis of Shan-wu-wei's commentary on the Mahavairohana Sutra, a seven-volume commentary on the Diamond Crown Sutra and a seven-volume commentary on the Susiddhikara Sutra, making a total of fourteen volumes.

The essence of these commentaries is as follows: “There are two types of teachings. One is called the exoteric, which corresponds to the doctrine of the three vehicles; in this, worldly truth and the superior truth of Buddhism are not completely fused. The other is called the esoteric, which corresponds
to the doctrine of the one vehicle; in this, worldly truth and the superior truth of Buddhism are fused together into a single entity. In turn, there are two types of esoteric teachings. One is called the esoteric teachings of theory; these are the doctrines found in works such as the Flower Garland, Wisdom, Vimalakirti, Lotus, and Nirvana sutras. But these, though they teach the nondualism of worldly truth and the superior truth, say nothing about mantras and mudras. The second is called the esoteric teachings of both theory and practice; these are the doctrines found in the Mahavairochana, Diamond Crown, and Susiddhhikara sutras. These teach the nondualism of worldly truth and the superior truth, and also explain mantras and mudras."

This essentially means that, in regard to the relative superiority of the Lotus Sutra and the three True Word sutras just mentioned, they agree in principle, both teaching the doctrine of three thousand realms in a single moment of life, but mudras and mantras are not mentioned in the Lotus Sutra. The Lotus Sutra thus represents the esoteric teachings of theory, while the three True Word sutras represent the esoteric teachings of both theory and practice. They are hence as far apart as heaven and earth, or clouds and mud, say the commentaries. Moreover, Jikaku insists that this is no private interpretation of his own, but represents the essential view put forward by the Tripitaka Master Shan–wu–wei in his commentary on the Mahavairochana Sutra.

But perhaps he felt that the relative worth of the Tendai and True Word schools was still a matter of doubt, or perhaps he hoped to dispel the misgivings of others. In any event, the biography of the Great Teacher Jikaku states as follows: "After the great teacher had completed writing his commentaries on the two sutras and thus accomplished his aim, he wondered to himself whether or not his commentaries conformed to the will of the Buddha, for he believed that if they did not conform to the Buddha's will they should never be widely circulated in the world. He therefore placed the commentaries before the image of the Buddha and determined to spend seven days and seven nights earnestly praying and endeavoring to make clear the validity of his purpose. On the fifth day, early in the morning at the time of the fifth watch, he dreamed that it was high noon and the sun was shining in the sky. Looking up, he took a bow and shot an arrow at it. The arrow struck the sun, which immediately began to roll over and over. After he woke from his dream, he realized that his views were profoundly in accord with the will of the Buddha, and he determined to transmit his commentaries to future ages."

While the Great Teacher Jikaku was in Japan, he made a thorough study of the teachings of both Dengyo and Kobo, and he spent a period of ten years in China studying under the eight distinguished priests, including the Tripitaka Master Pao–yüeh of southern India, learning all the loftiest and most secret doctrines. On this basis, he completed his commentaries on the two sutras. In addition, he prayed to the image of the Buddha, and awoke from dreaming that he had seen the arrow of wisdom strike the sun of the Middle Way. So great was his joy that he requested Emperor Nimmyo to issue an edict acknowledging Mount Hiei as a center of the True Word practice.

Though he was the chief priest of the Tendai school, he virtually became a True Word prelate, declaring that the three True Word sutras were the works that would ensure peace and protection of the nation. It has now been more than four hundred years since he spread these doctrines. The eminent leaders who have accepted them are as numer-
ous as rice and hemp seedlings, and the fervent believers who have embraced them as plentiful as bamboo plants and rushes.

As a result, of all the temples established throughout Japan by Emperor Kammu and the Great Teacher Dengyo, there is not one that has not become a propagator of the True Word doctrine. Both courtiers and warriors alike invite True Word priests to attend to their religious needs, look up to them as their teachers, confer offices upon them, and place them in charge of temples. And in the eye-opening ceremony carried out at the consecration of wooden and painted Buddhist images, the priests of all the eight schools of Buddhism now use the mudras and mantras of the Thus Come One Mahavairochana and the honored one Buddha Eye!

Question: When it comes to those who maintain that the Lotus Sutra is superior to the True Word teachings, should they try to make use of these commentaries by Jikaku, or should they reject them?

Answer: Shakyamuni Buddha laid down a rule for future conduct when he said that we should “rely on the Law and not upon persons.” Bodhisattva Nagarjuna says that one should rely on treatises that are faithful to the sutras, but not rely on those that distort the sutras. T’ien-t’ai states, “That which accords with the sutras is to be written down and made available. But put no faith in anything that in word or meaning fails to do so.” And the Great Teacher Dengyo says, “Depend upon the preachings of the Buddha, and do not put faith in traditions handed down orally.”

If one attends to such statements in the sutras, treatises, and commentaries, then one should not make dreams a basis for evaluating the Buddhist teachings. Rather, one should pay particular attention to those sutras and treatises that make clear the relative superiority of the Lotus Sutra and the Mahavairochana Sutra.

As for the assertion that the eye-opening ceremony for wooden and painted images cannot be carried out without the use of True Word mudras and mantras, this is the sheerest nonsense! Are we to suppose that, before the True Word school appeared on the scene, wooden and painted Buddhist images could not be consecrated? In the period before the appearance of the True Word school, there were wooden and painted images in India, China, and Japan that walked about or preached the teachings or spoke aloud. It would rather appear that, since people have begun to use True Word mudras and mantras in consecrating the Buddha images, the effectiveness of the ceremony has been completely lost.

This is a generally acknowledged point. I would merely like to say that when it comes to determining the truth of the Great Teacher Jikaku’s assertions there is no need for me, Nichiren, to cite any outside evidence to refute them. We have only to examine Jikaku’s own interpretations to understand the truth of the matter.

Question: How do we come to understand it?

Answer: We understand it when we realize that the source of Jikaku’s delusion was the dream that he had after he had written his commentaries asserting that the True Word teachings are superior to the Lotus Sutra. If his dream had been an auspicious one, then we would have to conclude that Jikaku was correct in claiming that the True Word teachings are superior. But can a dream of shooting the sun be called auspicious? Just try to find, anywhere in all the five thousand or seven thousand volumes of Buddhist scriptures or in the three thousand and more volumes of non-Buddhist literature, any evidence suggesting that to dream of
shooting the sun is an auspicious occurrence!

Let us look at a few pieces of evidence. King Ajatasatru dreamed that the moon was falling out of the sky. When he consulted his high minister Jivaka, the latter said, “This is a sign of the Buddha’s passing.” And when Subhadra also dreamed that the sun was falling from the sky, he said to himself, “This is a sign of the Buddha’s passing!” When the asuras fought with the lord Shakra, they first of all shot arrows at the sun and moon. The evil rulers King Chieh of the Hsia dynasty and King Chou of the Yin dynasty in ancient China are both said to have repeatedly shot arrows at the sun, and both destroyed themselves and brought an end to their dynasties.

Lady Maya dreamed that she conceived the sun and thereafter gave birth to Prince Siddhartha, [who in time became the Buddha Shakyamuni]. For this reason, the Buddha’s name as a child was Sun Seed. Japan or Nihon [meaning “source of the sun”] is so called because it is the land of the Sun Goddess. In light of these examples, Jikaku’s dream must mean that he used his two commentaries as arrows to shoot at the Sun Goddess, the Great Teacher Dengyo, Shakyamuni Buddha, and the Lotus Sutra. I, Nichiren, am an ignorable man, and I know nothing about the sutras and treatises. But I do know this much: anyone who would conclude from such a dream that the True Word teachings are superior to the Lotus Sutra will surely in this present life destroy his nation and ruin his family, and after his death will fall into the Avichi hell.

We in fact have a piece of evidence to settle the matter. If, when Japan and the Mongol forces engaged in combat, the prayers of the True Word priests had proved effective and Japan had won victory on that account, then we might be persuaded that the True Word school is worthy of respect. But at the time of the Jokyu Disturbance, though a considerable number of True Word priests prayed for the victory of the imperial forces and invoked curses on the forces of the Kamakura shogunate, the leader of the latter, the acting administrator [Hojo Yoshioki], emerged victorious. As a result, the Retired Emperor Gotoba was exiled to the province of Oki, and his sons were exiled to the island of Sado and to another province. Such was the effect of the True Word prayers for victory. In the end, the True Word prayers were like the cries of the fox that give him away, and the curses, as the Lotus Sutra says, “rebound upon the originator.” The three thousand priests of Mount Hiei were also attacked by the Kamakura troops and forced to submit.

Now the Kamakura government is at the height of power. Therefore, the True Word priests of To-ji, Mount Hiei, Onjo-ji, and the seven major temples of Nara, along with those priests of the Lotus school who have forgotten the teachings of their own school and instead slander the Law, have all made their way east to the Kanto region, where they bow their heads, bend their knees, and seek in various ways to win over the hearts of the warriors. They are in turn assigned positions as superintendents or chief officials of various temples and mountain monasteries, where they proceed to follow the same evil doctrines that earlier brought about the downfall of the imperial forces, using them to pray for the peace and safety of the nation!

The shogun and his family, along with the samurai who are in their service, very likely believe that as a result of such prayers the nation will actually become peaceful and secure. But so long as they employ the services of priests who invite grave disaster by ignoring the Lotus Sutra, the nation will in fact face certain destruction.
When I think how pitiful it would be if the nation were to be destroyed, and how lamentable would be the loss of life involved, I feel that I must risk my own life in order to make the truth of the situation clear. If the ruler desires the security of the nation, he should question the manner in which things are proceeding and try to discern the truth. But instead, all he does is listen to the calumnies of others and in one way or another treat me with animosity.

In past ages, when there were those who slandered the Law, Brahma, Shakra, the gods of the sun and moon, the four heavenly kings, and the deities of the earth, all of whom have sworn to defend the Lotus Sutra, would look on with disapproval. But because there was no one to proclaim the matter aloud, they would be forgiving, as one would be with an only child who misbehaves, at times pretending not to notice such slander, at times administering a mild reproof. Now that I am present to make clear the matter, however, I can only be amazed that the ruler should continue to listen to persons who slander the Law. Yet he does so, and on the contrary, even goes so far as to persecute the rare individual who attempts to enlighten him and rescue him from error. Not for just one or two days, one or two months, or even one or two years, but for a number of years on end now, I have met with greater difficulties than the sticks and staves that Bodhisattva Never Disparaging was obliged to face, and have encountered more fearful opposition than the murderous attacks inflicted on the monk Realization of Virtue.

During this period, the two great kings Brahma and Shakra, the gods of the sun and moon, the four heavenly kings, the gods of stars, and the deities of the earth have manifested their anger in various ways and again and again have delivered reprimands. And yet the attacks on me have only worsened. Finally, heaven in its wisdom has made the situation known to the sages of neighboring countries, enlisting them to add to the reprimands, and has caused the great evil spirits to enter the nation and deceive the people’s hearts, inciting them to rebel against their own rulers.

It is only reasonable to assume that, whether good or evil, the greater the portents, the greater will be the occurrences to follow. Now we have seen huge comets of a magnitude never known before in the 2,230 or more years since the Buddha’s passing, and have experienced earthquakes such as were never encountered before during that time. In China and Japan in the past, sages of outstanding wisdom and ability have from time to time appeared. But none, as an ally of the Lotus Sutra, has faced such powerful enemies within his country as have I, Nichiren. From the facts present before your very eyes, it should be apparent that Nichiren is the foremost person in the entire land of Jambudvipa.

In the seven hundred and more years since Buddhism was first introduced to Japan, there have been five thousand or seven thousand volumes of sutras read, and eight or ten schools propounded. The people of wisdom who have appeared have been as numerous as rice and hemp seedlings, and those who have spread the teachings widely have been as plentiful as bamboo plants and rushes. And yet of all the various Buddhas, there is none more highly revered, and none whose name is more widely called upon, than the Buddha Amida.

This practice of invoking the name of the Buddha Amida was advocated by Eshin in his work Essentials of Rebirth in the Pure Land, and as a result, one-third of the people of Japan became believers in the Nembutsu, the calling on the name of Amida. When Yukan
wrote *Ten Conditions for Rebirth in the Pure Land* and *The Rituals of the Assembly for Rebirth in the Pure Land*, two-thirds of all the people of this country became followers of the Nembutsu. And when Honen wrote *The Nembutsu Chosen above All*, then everyone alike in this nation became a Nembutsu devotee. Thus those people who chant the name of the Buddha Amida these days are by no means disciples of only one person.

This thing called the Nembutsu is a daimoku or chant based on the Two-Volumed, Meditation, and Amida sutras, which are provisional Mahayana sutras. If the daimoku of provisional Mahayana sutras is widely propagated and spread abroad, it must be a prelude to the propagation of the daimoku of the true Mahayana sutra, must it not? People who have a mind for such concerns should consider this matter carefully. If the provisional sutras are spread abroad, then the true sutra will surely be spread abroad. If the daimoku of the provisional sutras is spread abroad, then the daimoku of the true sutra will also surely be spread abroad.

In all the seven hundred and more years from the time of Emperor Kimmei to the present emperor [Go’uda], such a thing has never been seen or heard of, namely, a wise man who urges others to chant Nam-myoho-renge-kyo and who chants it himself.

When the sun rises, the stars go into hiding. When a worthy king appears, foolish kings perish. When the true sutra is spread widely, the provisional sutras will cease to circulate, and when a man of wisdom chants Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, those ignorant of it will follow after him as shadows follow a form and echoes follow a sound.

There can be no room to doubt that I, Nichiren, am the foremost votary of the Lotus Sutra in all of Japan. Indeed, from this we may assume that, even in China and India and throughout Jam-budvipa, there is no one who can stand side by side with me.

Question: The great earthquake of the Shoka era, the huge comet of the Bun’ei era—what caused these to appear?

Answer: T’ien-t’ai says, “Wise men can perceive the cause of things, as snakes know the way of snakes.”

Question: What do you mean by this statement?

Answer: When Bodhisattva Superior Practices appeared from beneath the earth, the other bodhisattvas such as Maitreya, Manjushri, Perceiver of the World’s Sounds, and Medicine King, though they had severed themselves from the first forty-one of the forty-two levels of ignorance, had not yet severed themselves from the last one, or fundamental darkness. Hence they were in effect ignorant persons, and consequently failed to understand that this bodhisattva, Superior Practices, had been summoned so that he might widely propagate Nam-myoho-renge-kyo of the “Life Span” chapter in the Latter Day of the Law.

Question: Is there anyone in Japan, China, or India who understands this matter?

Answer: Even the great bodhisattvas who have eradicated the illusions of thought and desire and severed themselves from the forty-one levels of ignorance cannot understand such a thing. How then could persons who have not rid themselves of even one iota of illusion be expected to do so?

Question: But if there is no wise person who understands why these calamities have arisen, then how can proper steps be taken to deal with them? If one does not understand the origin of an illness, though one may try to treat the sick person, the treatment will surely fail and the patient will die. Now, if the people resort to prayers without understanding the basic cause of these disasters, can there be any
doubt that the nation will in time face ruin? Ah, how dreadful to think of it!

Answer: They say that snakes know seven days in advance when a heavy rain is going to occur, and that crows know what lucky or unlucky events are going to take place in the course of a whole year. This must be because snakes are followers of the great dragons who make the rains fall, and crows have for a long time studied such matters of divination. Now I am only an ordinary person, and therefore have no understanding of the cause of these disasters. Nevertheless, I believe I can generally instruct you concerning this matter.

In the time of King P'ing of the Chou dynasty, persons appeared who let their hair hang down and went about naked. A court official named Hsin Yu divined on the basis of this and said, “Within a hundred years this dynasty will come to an end.” In the time of King Yu of the Chou, the mountains and rivers collapsed and were destroyed and the earth shook. A courtier named Po Yang, observing this, said, “Within twelve years our great ruler will meet with some dire happening.”

Now the great earthquake and the huge comet that have appeared are calamities brought about by heaven, which is enraged because the ruler of our country hates Nichiren and sides with the Zen, Nembutsu, and True Word priests who preach doctrines that will destroy the nation!

Question: How can I believe that?

Answer: The Sovereign Kings Sutra says, “Because evil people are respected and favored and good people are subjected to punishment, the stars and constellations, along with the winds and rains, all fail to move in their proper seasons.”

If this passage from the sutra is correct, then there can be no doubt that evil people exist in this country, and that the ruler and his ministers put their trust in such people. Moreover, there can be no doubt that a wise person exists in this country, and that the ruler of the nation hates and treats him as an enemy.

The same sutra also says, “The deities of the heaven of the thirty-three gods will all feel rage in their hearts, ... and strange and unusual shooting stars will fall to earth, two suns will come out at the same time, marauders will appear from other regions, and the people of the country will meet with death and disorder.”

Already in this country we have had unusual disturbances in the heavens as well as strange occurrences on earth, and the men of a foreign country have come to attack us. Can there be any doubt that the thirty-three heavenly gods are angry?

The Benevolent Kings Sutra states: “Evil monks, hoping to gain fame and profit, in many cases appear before the ruler, the crown prince, or the other princes, and take it upon themselves to preach doctrines that lead to the violation of the Buddhist Law and the destruction of the nation. The ruler, failing to perceive the truth of the situation, listens to and puts faith in such doctrines.”

The same work also refers to a time “when the sun and moon depart from their regular courses, when the seasons come in the wrong order, when a red sun or a black sun appears, when two, three, four, or five suns appear at the same time, when the sun is eclipsed and loses its light, or when one, two, three, four, or five coronas appear around the sun.”

These passages mean that, if evil monks fill the nation and deceive the ruler, the crown prince, and the other princes, preaching doctrines that lead to the violation of the Buddhist Law and the downfall of the nation, and if the ruler and the other high officials
allow themselves to be deceived by these monks and come to believe that such doctrines will in fact ensure the protection of the Buddhist Law and the nation, and act accordingly, then the sun and the moon will behave strangely, and great winds, rains, and fires will make their appearance. Next will come internal disorder, relatives and kin turning against one another and bringing about armed revolt. Many allies and supporters of the ruler and other high officials will be struck down, and then invaders will come from other nations to attack them, until they are forced to commit suicide or are captured alive or obliged to surrender. This will come about entirely because they heed doctrines that lead to the destruction of the Buddhist Law and cause the downfall of the nation.

The Protection Sutra says: “The teachings preached by the Thus Come One Shakyamuni cannot be in the least bit harmed by the various devils of heaven, or by the non-Buddhists, or by evil men, or by seers who have attained the five transcendental powers. And yet they can be so thoroughly destroyed by those evil monks who are monks in name and appearance only that nothing whatsoever remains of them. In this respect they are like Mount Sumeru. Though one might gather all the grass and wood from the major world system, pile them up as fuel, and burn it for a long period of time, Mount Sumeru would not suffer the least degree of injury. But when the conflagration that marks the end of the kalpa of decline breaks out and fire appears from within the mountain itself, then in an instant the whole mountain will be consumed by the flames and not even ashes will remain.”

The Lotus-like Face Sutra says: “The Buddha said to Ananda: ‘It is like the case of a lion who has died. No creature that lives in the air, in the soil, in water, or on land will venture to eat the flesh of the dead lion. Only the worms that are born from the body of the lion itself will feed on the lion’s flesh. In the same way, Ananda, the Buddha’s teachings cannot be destroyed by outside forces. But the evil monks who exist within the body of my teachings—they are the ones who will destroy these teachings that the Buddha has labored over and worked to establish for a period of three great asamkhya kalpas.’”

What do these passages from the sutras mean? In the past, the Buddha Kashyapa described to King Kriki the Latter Day of the Law of the Thus Come One Shakyamuni and revealed what sort of people would destroy Shakyamuni’s teachings. Evil men might appear such as King Mihirakula, who burned all the Buddhist halls and monasteries of India and murdered all the monks and nuns of its sixteen major states, or Emperor Wu-tsun of China, who destroyed more than 4,600 temples and pagodas in the nine regions of China and forced 260,500 priests and nuns to return to lay life. But such men could not destroy the teachings preached by Shakyamuni Buddha. It is the priests themselves, who wrap their bodies in the three robes permitted to them, hang a single begging bowl about their necks, store up in their minds the eighty thousand teachings, and with their mouths recite the twelve divisions of the scriptures—they are the ones who will destroy the Buddha’s teachings.

It is like the case of Mount Sumeru, the golden mountain. Though one might gather all the grass and wood in the major world system, pile them up until they completely filled the heaven of the four heavenly kings as well as the others of the six heavens of the world of desire, and burn them for one year, two years, a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, or a million years, the mountain would not suffer the slightest in-
jury. But when the time comes for the great fire that ends the kalpa of decline, a tiny flame no bigger than a bean will break out at the base of the mountain, and not only will Mount Sumeru be consumed, but the entire major world system will likewise be destroyed.

If the Buddha’s predictions are to be believed, then it would appear that the Buddhist priests of the ten schools or the eight schools of our country will be the ones to burn up the Mount Sumeru of the Buddha’s teaching. The priests of the Hinayana schools of the Dharma Analysis Treasury, Establishment of Truth, and Precepts will be the flames of anger that burn with jealous hatred of the Mahayana schools. And priests such as Shan-wu-wei of the True Word school, San-chieh of the Zen school, and Shan-tao of the Pure Land school are the worms that are born from the body of the lion that is the Buddha’s teaching.

The Great Teacher Dengyo in his writings described the eminent scholars of the Three Treatises, Dharma Characteristics, Flower Garland, and other schools of Japanese Buddhism as six kinds of worms.\(^{151}\) I, Nichiren, would dub the founders of the True Word, Zen, and Pure Land schools the three kinds of worms, and Jikaku, Annen, and Eshin of the Tendai school the three worms who devoured the lion-body of the Lotus Sutra and the Great Teacher Dengyo.

So long as Nichiren, who is working to expose the root of these great slanders against the correct teaching, is treated with animosity, the heavenly deities will withhold their light, the gods of the earth will be angered, and disturbances and calamities will appear in great numbers. You must understand that, because I speak concerning the most important matter in the entire land of Jambudvipa, my words are accompanied by portents of the first magnitude. How ironic, how pitiful, that all the people of Japan should fall into the great citadel of the hell of incessant suffering! But how fortunate, how joyous, to think that with this unworthy body I have received in my heart the seeds of Buddhahood!

Just see how it will be! When tens of thousands of armed ships from the great kingdom of the Mongols come over the sea to attack Japan, everyone from the ruler on down to the multitudes of common people will turn their backs on all the Buddhist temples and all the shrines of the gods and will raise their voices in chorus, crying Nam-myoho-renge-kyo! Nam-myoho-renge-kyo! They will press their palms together and say, “Priest Nichiren, Priest Nichiren, save us!”

In India King Mihirakula was obliged to press his palms together in submission before King Baladitya, and in Japan Taï no Munemori was forced to pay reverence to Kajiwara Kagetoki.\(^{152}\) This is in accord with the principle that men of great arrogance should end by bowing before their enemies.

Those vicious and arrogant monks described in the Lotus Sutra in the beginning armed themselves with sticks and staves and used them to belabor Bodhisattva Never Disparaging. But later they pressed their palms together and repented of their error. Devadatta inflicted an injury on Shakyamuni Buddha that drew blood, but when he was on his deathbed, he cried out, “Namu (Devotion)!?” If only he had been able to cry, “Namu Buddha (Devotion to the Buddha)!?” he would have been spared the fate of falling into hell. But so grave were the deeds he had committed that he could only utter the word “Namu” and could not pronounce the word “Buddha” before he died.

And soon the eminent priests of Japan will no doubt be trying to cry out, “Namu Nichiren Shonin (Devotion to the Sage Nichiren)!?” But most
likely they will only have time enough to utter the one word, “Namu!” How pitiful, how pitiful!

In the secular texts it says, “A sage is one who fully understands those things that have not yet made their appearance.” And in the Buddhist texts it says, “A sage is one who knows the three existences of life—past, present, and future.”

Three times now I have gained distinction by having such knowledge. The first time was the first year of the Bunno era (1260), cyclical sign kanoe-sami, on the sixteenth day of the seventh month, when I presented my *On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land* to His Lordship, the lay priest of Saimyo-ji, by way of the lay priest Yadoya Mitsunori. At that time, I said to the lay priest Yadoya, “Please advise His Lordship that devotion to the Zen school and the Nembutsu school should be abandoned. If this advice is not heeded, trouble will break out within the ruling clan, and the nation will be attacked by another country.”

The second time was the twelfth day of the ninth month of the eighth year of the Bun’ei era (1271), at the hour of the monkey (3:00-5:00 p.m.), when I said to Hei no Saemon-no-jo: “Nichiren is the pillar and beam of Japan. Doing away with me is toppling the pillar of Japan! Immediately you will all face ‘the calamity of revolt within one’s own domain,’ or strife among yourselves, and also ‘the calamity of invasion from foreign lands.’ Not only will the people of our nation be put to death by foreign invaders, but many of them will be taken prisoner. All the Nembutsu and Zen temples, such as Kencho-ji, Jufuku-ji, Gokuraku-ji, Daibutsuden, and Choraku-ji, should be burned to the ground, and their priests taken to Yui Beach to have their heads cut off. If this is not done, then Japan is certain to be destroyed!”

The third time was the eighth day of the fourth month of last year (the eleventh year of the Bun’ei era), when I said to Saemon-no-jo: “Even if it seems that, because I was born in the ruler’s domain, I follow him in my actions, I will never follow him in my heart. There can be no doubt that the Nembutsu leads to the hell of incessant suffering, and that the Zen school is the work of the heavenly devil. And the True Word school in particular is a great plague to this nation of ours. The task of praying for victory over the Mongols should not be entrusted to the True Word priests! If so grave a matter is entrusted to them, then the situation will only worsen rapidly and our country will face destruction.”

[Hei no Saemon-no-jo] Yoritsuna then asked, “When do you think the Mongols will attack?”

I replied, “The sacred scriptures do not indicate the time. But the signs show that heaven is extremely angry. It would appear that the attack is imminent. It will probably occur before this year has ended.”

Yet it was not I, Nichiren, who made these three important pronouncements. Rather it was in all cases the spirit of the Thus Come One Shakya-muni that had taken possession of my body. And having personally experienced this, I am beside myself with joy.

This is the all-important doctrine of three thousand realms in a single moment of life taught in the Lotus Sutra. What does the Lotus Sutra mean when it says, “This reality [the true aspect of all phenomena] consists of the appearance…”?” “Appearance,” the first of the ten factors of life, is the most important of them all; this is why the Buddha appeared in the world. “Wise men can perceive the cause of things, as snakes know the way of snakes.”

Little streams come together to form the great ocean, and tiny particles of dust accumulate to form Mount Sume-
ru. When I, Nichiren, first took faith in the Lotus Sutra, I was like a single drop of water or a single particle of dust in all the country of Japan. But later, when two people, three people, ten people, and eventually a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, and a million people come to recite the Lotus Sutra and transmit it to others, then they will form a Mount Sumeru of perfect enlightenment, an ocean of great nirvana. Seek no other path by which to attain Buddhahood!

Question: At the time of your second pronouncement on the twelfth day of the ninth month in the eighth year of the Bun'ei era, when you incurred the wrath of the authorities, how did you know that if harm was done to you rebellion would break out and the country would also be attacked by armies from abroad?

Answer: The fiftieth volume of the Great Collection Sutra states: “There may perhaps be various kings of the Kshatriya class who act in a way contrary to the Law, causing anguish to the voice-hearer disciples of the World-Honored One. Perhaps they may curse and revile them or beat and injure them with swords and staves, or deprive them of their robes and begging bowls and the other things they need. Or perhaps they may restrain and persecute those who give alms to the disciples. If there should be those who do such things, then we will see to it that their enemies in foreign lands rise up suddenly of their own accord and march against them, and we will cause uprisings to break out within their states. We will bring about pestilence and famine, unseasonable winds and rains, and contention, wrangling, and slander. And we will make certain that those rulers do not last for long, but that their nations are brought to destruction.”

There are many passages such as this in the sutras, but I have chosen this one because it is particularly pertinent to the times and to my own position. In this passage, the beings who are speaking are all the deities of the threefold world, including Brahma, Shakra, the devil king of the sixth heaven, the gods of the sun and moon, the four heavenly kings, and all the dragons. These eminent beings appeared before the Buddha and took a vow, declaring that after the Buddha’s passing, in the Former, Middle, and Latter Days of the Law, if there should be monks of erroneous belief who complain to the ruler concerning one who practices the correct teaching, and if those who are close to the ruler or who are loyal to him should simply accept the word of these monks because of respect for them and, without inquiring into the truth of the matter, heap abuse and slander on this wise person, then they, the deities, would see to it that, though there may have been no reason for such an occurrence, major revolt would suddenly break out within that country, and in time the nation would also be attacked by another country, so that both the ruler and his state would be destroyed.

On the one hand, I am delighted to think that my prophecies shall come true, yet on the other hand, it pains me deeply. I have not committed any fault in my present existence. All I have done is try to repay the debt I owe to the country of my birth by endeavoring to save it from disaster. That my advice was not heeded was certainly a cause of great regret to me.

Not only was it not heeded, but I was summoned before the authorities, and the scroll of the fifth volume of the Lotus Sutra was snatched from the breast of my robe and I was harshly beaten with it. In the end, I was arrested and paraded through the streets of the city. At that time, I called out: “You gods of the sun and moon up in the sky, here is Nichiren meeting with this great persecution. If you are not
ready to risk your lives to aid me, does this mean, then, that I am not the votary of the Lotus Sutra? If that is so, then I should correct my mistaken belief at once. If, on the other hand, Nichiren is the votary of the Lotus Sutra, then you should send some sign of that fact to this country at once! If you do not do so, then you, the gods of the sun and moon and all the other deities, will be no more than great liars who have deceived Shakyamuni, Many Treasures, and the Buddhas of the ten directions. Devadatta was guilty of falsehood and deception and Kokalika was a great liar, but you deities are guilty of telling lies that are a hundred, thousand, ten thousand, million times greater!"

I had no sooner uttered these words than the nation was suddenly faced with internal revolt. Since the country has fallen into grave disorder, then, although I may be a mere common mortal of no social standing, so long as I uphold the Lotus Sutra, I deserve to be called the foremost Great Man in all Japan at this time.

Question: In the delusion that is arrogance, there are different types of arrogance such as the seven types, the nine types, and the eight types. But your arrogance is a hundred, thousand, ten thousand, million times greater than the greatest degree of arrogance defined in the Buddhist teachings.

The Scholar Gunaprabha refused to bow before Bodhisattva Maitreya, and the Great Arrogant Brahman made himself a dais supported by four legs [representing the four sages Maheshvara, Vishnu, and Narayana, along with Shakyamuni Buddha]. Mahadeva, though only a common mortal, declared that he was an arhat, and the Scholar Vimalamitra proclaimed himself foremost within all the five regions of India. These men were all guilty of faults that condemned them to the Avichi hell or the hell of incessant suffering. How, then, do you dare to claim that you are the wisest man in the entire land of Jambudvipa? Will you not fall into hell like the others? What a frightful thing to do!

Answer: Have you really understood the meaning of the seven types of arrogance, or of the nine types or the eight types? The World-Honored One of Great Enlightenment declared, “I am the foremost throughout the threefold world.” All the non-Buddhist leaders predicted that heaven would surely punish him immediately, or that the earth would open up and swallow him. [But no such thing happened.]

The three hundred or more priests of the seven major temples of Nara asserted that the priest Saicho [the Great Teacher Dengyo] was an incarnation of Mahadeva or of the Iron Belly Brahman. Nevertheless, heaven did not punish him, but on the contrary, protected him in various ways, and the earth did not open up and swallow him but remained as hard as a diamond. The Great Teacher Dengyo founded a temple on Mount Hiei and became the eyes of all living beings. In the end, the priests of the seven major temples acknowledged their fault and became his disciples, and the people of the various provinces throughout the country became his lay supporters. Thus, when someone who is superior declares that he is superior, it may sound like arrogance, but that person will in fact receive great benefits [because he is actually praising the Law that he embraces].

The Great Teacher Dengyo said, “The Tendai Lotus school is superior to the other schools because of the sutra that it is founded on. Therefore, in declaring its superiority, it is not simply praising itself and disparaging others.”

The seventh volume of the Lotus Sutra states, “Just as among all the mountains, Mount Sumeru is foremost, so this Lotus Sutra is likewise. Among
all the sutras, it holds the highest place. The sutras that the Buddha preached earlier such as the Flower Garland, Wisdom, and Mahavairochana sutras, the Immeasurable Meanings Sutra, which he preached at the same time as the Lotus Sutra, and the Nirvana Sutra, which he was to preach later, altogether amounting to the five thousand or seven thousand volumes, as well as the sutras of the land of India, the dragon king’s palace, the heaven of the four heavenly kings, the heaven of the thirty-three gods, and the sun and moon, and those of all the worlds in the ten directions, are lesser mountains such as the Dirt Mountains, the Black Mountains, the Small Iron Encircling Mountains, or the Great Iron Encircling Mountains in comparison to this Lotus Sutra that has been brought to Japan, for it is comparable to Mount Sumeru.

The seventh volume also says, “A person who can accept and uphold this sutra is likewise foremost among all living beings.”

Let us consider what this passage means. [The other sutras have their upholders.] Thus, the Flower Garland Sutra is upheld by the bodhisattvas Universal Worthy, Moon of Deliverence, Nagarjuna, and Ashvaghosha, the Great Teacher Fa-tsang, the Teacher of the Nation Ch’ing-liang, Empress Wu, the Preceptor Shinjo, the Administrator of Priests Roben, and Emperor Shomu. The Profound Secrets and Wisdom sutras have as their supporters Bodhisattva Superlative Truth Appearing, the Venerable Subhuti, the Great Teacher Chia-hsiang, the Tripitaka Master Hsüan-tsang, the emperors T’ai-tsung and Kao-tsung, the priests Kanroku and Dosho, and Emperor Kotoku. Upholding the Mahavairochana Sutra of the True Word school are Vajrasattva, the bodhisattvas Nagarjuna and Nagabodhi, King Satavahan, the Tripitaka masters Shan-wu-wei, Chin-kang-chih, and Pu-K’ung, the emperors Hsüan-tsung and Tai-tsung, Hui-kuo, and the great teachers Kobo and Jikaku. And upholding the Nirvana Sutra are Bodhisattva Kashyapa, the fifty-two types of beings, and the Tripitaka Master Dharmaraksha. Fa-yün of Kuang-chessu temple and the ten eminent priests, three from southern China and seven from northern China, also embraced sutras other than the Lotus Sutra.

But if, in contrast to all these, the ordinary people in the evil world of the latter age, those who do not observe a single one of the precepts and who appear to others to be icchantikas, firmly believe, as the sutra states, that there is no path to Buddhahood outside of the Lotus Sutra, which surpasses all other sutras preached before, at the same time, or after it—then such people, though they may not have a particle of understanding, are a hundred, thousand, ten thousand, million times superior to those great sages who uphold the other sutras. That is what this passage from the Lotus Sutra is saying.

Among the supporters of the other sutras, there are some who encourage other people to uphold such sutras temporarily as a step toward leading them to the Lotus Sutra. There are others who continue to cling to the other sutras and never move on to the Lotus Sutra. And there are still others who not only continue to uphold the other sutras, but are so intensely attached to them that they even declare the Lotus Sutra to be inferior to such sutras.

But the votaries of the Lotus Sutra should now keep the following in mind. The Lotus Sutra says that, just as among all the rivers, streams, and other bodies of water, for example, the ocean is foremost, so a person who upholds the Lotus Sutra is likewise. It goes on to say that, just as among all the stars
and their like, the moon, a god’s son, is foremost, so a person who upholds the Lotus Sutra is likewise.\textsuperscript{169} Keep these words in mind. All of the wise persons of Japan at the present time are like the host of stars, and I, Nichiren, am like the full moon.

Question: Is there anyone from times past who has spoken the way you have just done?

Answer: The Great Teacher Dengyo states: “One should understand that the sutras on which the other schools base their teachings are not foremost among the sutras, and those people who can uphold such sutras are not foremost among the multitude. But the Lotus Sutra, which is upheld by the Tendai Lotus school, is the foremost of all the sutras, and therefore those who can uphold the Lotus are foremost among living beings. This is borne out by the words of the Buddha himself. How could it be mere self-praise?”\textsuperscript{170}

A tick that attaches itself to the tail of a ch’i-lin can race a thousand miles in one day, and a worthless man who accompanies a wheel-turning king can circle in an instant about the four continents of the world. Who would question the truth of such matters? Dengyo’s words, “How could it be mere self-praise?” should be kept in mind.

If what he says is correct, then a person who upholds the Lotus Sutra just as it teaches must be superior to the king Brahma and more worthy than the lord Shakra. If you have asuras to help you, you can lift and carry even Mount Sumeru. If you have dragons in your employ, you can drain all the water in the ocean until it runs dry.

The Great Teacher Dengyo says: “Those who praise him will receive blessings that will pile up as high as Mount Calm and Bright, while those who slander him will be committing a fault that will condemn them to the hell of incessant suffering.”\textsuperscript{171} And the Lotus Sutra states, “If this person [should slander a sutra such as this], or on seeing those who read, recite, copy, and uphold this sutra, should despise, hate, envy, or bear grudges against them... When his life comes to an end he will enter the Avichi hell.”\textsuperscript{172}

If these golden words of Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, are true, if the testimony to their truth given by Many Treasures Buddha is not false, and if the sign of assent given by the Buddhas of the ten directions when they extended their tongues is to be trusted, then there can be no doubt that all living beings in Japan at the present time are destined to fall into the hell of incessant suffering.

The eighth volume of the Lotus Sutra says, “In later ages if there are those who accept, uphold, read, and recite this sutra... Their wishes will not be in vain, and in this present existence they will gain the reward of good fortune.”\textsuperscript{173} It also says, “If there is anyone who offers alms to them and praises them, then in this present existence he will have manifest reward for it.”\textsuperscript{174}

In these two passages are the words “in this present existence they will gain the reward of good fortune” and “in this present existence he will have manifest reward for it.” These two statements in their Chinese original each comprise eight characters. If these sixteen characters are meaningless, and if Nichiren does not receive some great reward in this present life, then these golden words of the Thus Come One will be in the same category as the empty lies of Devadatta, and the testimony of Many Treasures Buddha that guaranteed their truth will be no different from the baseless assertions of Kokalika. Then none of the people who slander the correct teaching will ever be condemned to the Avichi hell, and the Buddhas of the three existences will not exist! But could such a thing be possible?

Therefore, I say to you, my disci-
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THE SELECTION OF THE TIME

...bles, try practicing as the Lotus Sutra teaches, exerting yourselves without begrudging your lives! Test the truth of Buddhism now! Nam-myoho-renge-kyo, Nam-myoho-renge-kyo.

Question: In the Lotus Sutra we find this passage "We care nothing for our bodies or lives but are anxious only for the unsurpassed way." And the Nirvana Sutra says: "For example, it is like a royal envoy skilled in discussion and clever with expedient means who, when sent on a mission to another land, would rather, even though it costs him his life, in the end conceal none of the words of his ruler. Wise persons too do this. In the midst of ordinary people and without begrudging their lives, those who are wise should without fail proclaim the Thus Come One's prize teaching from the correct and equal sutras of the great vehicle, that is, all living beings possess the Buddha nature." But under what circumstances should one be prepared to sacrifice one's life and safety? I would like you to explain the matter to me in detail.

Answer: When I first embarked upon the Buddhist practice, I supposed that the statement "We care nothing for our bodies or lives" meant receiving the imperial command and traveling to China the way men like Dennyo, Kobo, Jikaku, and Chisho did, or that it meant setting out from China as the Triptaka Master Hsüan-tsang did, traveling all the way to India, dying six times in the attempt and striving again with each rebirth. Or I thought that it meant throwing away one's life the way the boy Snow Mountains did in order to learn the second half of a verse, or burning one's arms as an offering for seventy-two thousand years the way Bodhisattva Medicine King did. But if we go by the passage of scripture that you have quoted, these are not the kind of thing that is meant.

As to this passage in the sutra, "We care nothing for our bodies or lives," the sutra earlier describes the three types of enemies who will vilify and attack one with swords and staves, and in all likelihood deprive one of life and body. And to understand the passage in the Nirvana Sutra that speaks of carrying out one's duty "even though it costs him his life," we should look at the passage later on in the same sutra that says, "There are icchantikas, or persons of incorrigible disbelief. They pretend to be arhats, living in deserted places and speaking slanderously of the correct and equal sutras of the great vehicle. When ordinary people see them, they all suppose that they are true arhats and speak of them as great bodhisattvas."

Speaking of the third of the three types of enemies, the Lotus Sutra says, "Or there will be forest-dwelling monks wearing clothing of patched rags and living in retirement... they will be respected and revered by the world as though they were arhats who possess the six transcendental powers." And the Parinirvana Sutra says, "There are also icchantikas who resemble arhats but who commit evil deeds."

These passages from the sutras speak of powerful enemies of the correct teaching. Such enemies are to be found not so much among evil rulers and evil ministers, among non-Buddhists and devil kings, or among monks who disobey the precepts. Rather they are those great slanderers of the Law who are to be found among the eminent monks who appear to be upholders of the precepts and men of wisdom.

The Great Teacher Miao-lo, speaking of such men, says, "The third [group] is the most formidable of all. This is because the second and third ones are increasingly harder to recognize for what they really are." The fifth volume of the Lotus Sutra says, "This Lotus Sutra is the secret storehouse of the Buddhas, the Thus Come Ones. Among the sutras, it..."
holds the highest place.” In this passage we should note the words “it holds the highest place.” The phrase comprises four characters in the original. If we are to believe this passage, then we must say that the votary of the Lotus Sutra is one who proclaims the Lotus Sutra to stand supreme above all the other sutras.

Let us suppose now that there are many people who are held in great respect by the ruler, and that these people claim that there are sutras superior to the Lotus Sutra, disputing with the votary of the Lotus Sutra on this point. They enjoy the trust and support of the ruler and his ministers, while the votary of the Lotus Sutra is a person of low station and humble learning; therefore, the whole nation joins in heaping abuse on him. If at that time he conducts himself in the manner of Bodhisattva Never Disparaging or the Scholar Bhadraruchi and continues to assert the superiority of the Lotus Sutra, he will almost certainly lose his life. To practice with such resolve in the face of this threat is the most important thing of all.

Now I, Nichiren, am confronting just such a situation. Though I am a humble man, I have proclaimed that the great teachers Kobo and Jikaku, the Tripitaka masters Shan-wu-wei, Chinkang-chih, and Pu-k’ung, and others of their kind are potent enemies of the Lotus Sutra, and that, if the words of the sutra are to be trusted, they have without doubt fallen into the hell of incessant suffering. To proclaim such a thing as this is a very grave step. It would be easier to walk naked into a raging fire, easier to take up Mount Sumeru in one’s hands and toss it away, easier to hoist a great stone on one’s back and walk across the ocean, than to do what I have done. To establish the correct teaching in this country of Japan is indeed a difficult thing.

If Shakyamuni Buddha, the lord of teachings, of the pure land of Eagle Peak, Many Treasures Buddha of the World of Treasure Purity, the Buddhas of the ten directions who are Shakyamuni’s emanations, the bodhisattvas as numerous as the dust particles of a thousand worlds who sprang up out of the earth, Brahma and Shakra, the gods of the sun and moon, and the four heavenly kings do not, conspicuously or inconspicuously, give me their protection and lend me aid, then they will never know a single day or a single hour of peace and safety!

Background

This treatise, counted among Nichiren Daishonin’s five major writings, was written at Minobu in the first year of Kenji (1275) and was entrusted to a believer named Yui who lived in Nishiyama of Suruga Province. As with a number of his other important works, it is written in the form of a dialogue between the Daishonin and a hypothetical questioner.

The Daishonin had met and remonstrated with Hei no Saemon, who represented the regent Hojo Tokimune, in the fourth month of 1274, after returning from his exile to Sado. When this, his third and last admonition to the government, went unheeded, the Daishonin left to live in the forest of Mount Minobu. In the tenth month of 1274, Mongol forces launched an invasion of Japan just as the Daishonin had predicted to Hei no Saemon during their meeting. News of the invasion, the first in Japan’s history, came as a
profound shock. Though the invasion ultimately failed, people were terrified that the Mongols would seize the next opportunity to launch a second attack. It was amid this uneasy situation that the Daishonin wrote *The Selection of the Time*.

“Time” in the title, *The Selection of the Time*, refers to the Latter Day of the Law, when the “pure Law” of Shakymuni’s teaching was to become obscured and lost and the “great pure Law” of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo was to be spread.

Nichiren Daishonin set forth elsewhere five guides or criteria for the propagation of Buddhism: namely, a correct understanding of (1) the teaching, (2) the people’s capacity, (3) the time, (4) the country, and (5) the sequence of propagation. *The Selection of the Time* places the greatest emphasis upon the factor of the time.

In this writing, the Daishonin refers to the five five-hundred-year periods described in the Great Collection Sutra to outline the events of Buddhism over the first twenty-five hundred years following Shakyamuni’s passing. (1) In the first five hundred years of the Former Day of the Law, Mahakashyapa, Ananda, and others propagated the Hinayana teachings in India. (2) The second five hundred years of the Former Day saw the advent of Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, and others, who propagated the provisional Mahayana teachings. (3) In the first five hundred years of the Middle Day of the Law, the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai appeared in China and propagated the theoretical teaching of the Lotus Sutra. (4) The second five hundred years of the Middle Day saw the Great Teacher Dengyo propagate the theoretical teaching in Japan and establish the ordination platform for administering Mahayana precepts. (5) The first five hundred years of the Latter Day is the time when, according to the Great Collection Sutra, “the pure Law will become obscured and lost.” Nichiren Daishonin proclaims that during this period the great pure Law will be spread far and wide throughout the entire world.

Nichiren Daishonin then states that one who spreads the teachings of the Lotus Sutra in the Latter Day of the Law is the votary of the Lotus Sutra who possesses the three virtues of sovereign, teacher, and parent.

The Daishonin describes the Law that will spread in the Latter Day as follows: “Unbelievable as it may seem, there clearly appears in the text of the Lotus Sutra a correct Law that is supremely profound and secret, one that, though expounded in full by the Buddha, in the time since his passing has never yet been propagated by Mahakashyapa, Ananda, Ashvaghosha, Nagarjuna, Asanga, or Vasubandhu, nor even by T’ien-t’ai or Dengyo” (p. 560).

The latter half of the treatise exposes the errors of the Nembutsu, Zen, and True Word schools, pointing out these mistakes as the root causes of the calamities besetting Japan at that time. In *On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land*, the Daishonin focused his criticism on the Nembutsu doctrine as a primary source of disaster. In *The Selection of the Time*, he reveals, among others, the fallacies of the True Word school whose leading priests had by this time won the confidence of the ruling class, who in turn relied on the school to offer prayers for subduing enemies. The Daishonin points out the futility of such prayers by referring to the Mongol expeditionary force that had attacked Japan in 1274 and to the Jokyu Disturbance of 1221, when the imperial court placed its faith in the True Word prayer rituals and was nonetheless defeated by the Kamakura government.

The Daishonin points out the doctrinal error of the True Word school. True Word patriarchs incorporated
T'ien-t'ai's doctrine of three thousand realms in a single moment of life into their own teaching and then asserted that it is to be found in the Mahavairochana Sutra, the basic scripture of their own school. They even went so far as to accuse T'ien-t'ai of stealing the supreme doctrine of the True Word. They asserted the superiority of the Mahavairochana Sutra over the Lotus Sutra, and of Mahavairochana Buddha, who appears in that sutra but is not an actual historical figure, over Shakyamuni Buddha.

Then he declares, "In China and Japan in the past, sages of outstanding wisdom and ability have from time to time appeared. But none, as an ally of the Lotus Sutra, has faced such powerful enemies within his country as have I, Nichiren. From the facts present before your very eyes, it should be apparent that Nichiren is the foremost person in the entire land of Jambudvipa" (p. 574).

The Daishonin next attributes the underlying cause of calamities to failure of the nation's ruler to honor the Lotus Sutra and its votary.

The Buddhist and non-Buddhist texts say that a sage is one who knows the future. By this account, the Daishonin is a great sage, because, as he says, "Three times now I have gained distinction by having such knowledge" (p. 579). The predictions he made on the three occasions he remonstrated with the authorities all came true. In his third remonstration, he said to Hei no Saemon, "Even if it seems that, because I was born in the ruler's domain, I follow him in my actions, I will never follow him in my heart" (p. 579). This can be taken as a bold expression of freedom of thought and belief, a rare statement in thirteenth-century Japan.

He further says that although he is a mere common mortal, because he is the votary of the Lotus Sutra, he deserves to be called the foremost Great Man in Japan. "Great Man" is one of the titles of a Buddha.

In response to this statement, the questioner in this writing criticizes him, saying that his arrogance is beyond measure. The Daishonin replies, in effect, that what seems like arrogance on his part is actually sublime conviction in the superiority of the Law that he embraces. Then he turns to his followers: "Therefore, I say to you, my disciples, try practicing as the Lotus Sutra teaches, exerting yourselves without begrudging your lives! Test the truth of Buddhism now" (p. 584).

In conclusion, the Daishonin declares that he himself has lived up to the passage in the "Encouraging Devotion" chapter of the Lotus Sutra: "We care nothing for our bodies or lives but are anxious only for the unsurpassed way." That is, in order to reveal the correct teaching, he has struggled continually without begrudging his life in the face of persecution by the three powerful enemies—especially those of the third group, respected priests who induce secular authorities to persecute the votaries of the Lotus Sutra.

Notes

1. Lotus Sutra, chap. 7.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., chap. 2.
4. The Sutra of the Conversion of Barbarians by Lao Tzu states that Lao Tzu was white-haired at birth and had the appearance of an old man.
5. Lotus Sutra, chap. 2.
6. A reference to chapter 15 of the Lotus Sutra. Seeing the Bodhisattvas of the Earth, Maitreya and others in the assembly wonder how, in the mere forty years since his enlightenment under the bodhi tree, the Buddha has contrived to teach and train so many majestic and noble bodhisattvas. It is, Maitreya says, as though a youth of twenty-
five were to point to a hundred-year-old man and say, “This is my son.”
7. Lotus Sutra, chap. 2.
8. Ibid., chap. 3.
9. Ibid., chap. 10.
10. Ibid., chap. 14.
12. The Annotations on the Nirvana Sutra.
13. To these people Shakyamuni Buddha preached the teachings of the Flower Garland Sutra immediately after his enlightenment.
14. At Deer Park (Skt Mrigadava) in Varanasi, present-day Benares, Shakyamuni preached the teachings that became the Agama sutras.
15. One of the five types of vision—the physical eyes, the heavenly eye, the wisdom eye, the Dharma eye, and the Buddha eye. The “eye of the Buddha” here means the sutras that consist of Shakyamuni’s teachings.
16. The Buddha is often likened to the sun because he dispels the ignorance of the people.
17. The period when people are sure to attain enlightenment by practicing the Buddha’s teachings.
18. The period in which people will practice meditation in order to perceive the truth.
19. The period when people will concentrate on studying and reciting the sutras and listening to lectures on them.
20. The period when numerous temples and stupas are built.
21. This period refers to the beginning of the Latter Day of the Law. The last of the five five-hundred-year periods, which is called the age of conflict.
22. These remarks are found in Tao-ch’o’s Collected Essays on the World of Peace and Delight.
23. This explanation appears in Honen’s work The Nembutsu Chosen above All.
26. Ibid.
27. On the World of Peace and Delight.
29. Ibid., chap. 17.
31. Ibid., chap. 10.
32. Ibid., chap. 14.
33. Ibid., chap. 23.
34. All three of these quotations appear in a verse in chapter 13 of the Lotus Sutra, which details the three powerful enemies who will attack the votaries of the Lotus Sutra in the evil latter age.
35. According to chapter 21 of the Lotus Sutra, the heavenly beings cried out in the midst of the sky that in the saha world a Buddha named Shakyamuni was preaching the Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Law, the sutra kept in mind by the Buddhas, encouraging all to offer obeisance and alms to Shakyamuni Buddha. Then all the various beings spoke these words, “Hail, Shakyamuni Buddha! Hail, Shakyamuni Buddha!” Because the essence of the Lotus Sutra is the Law of Nam-myoho-RENge-kyo that enabled all the Buddhas to become Buddhas, Nichiren Daishonin states that all the various beings in the worlds of the ten directions cried out, “Nam-myoho-RENge-kyo, Nam-myoho-RENge-kyo.”
36. Words and Phrases.
39. Katsu refers to an ancient kingdom extending from Manchuria to northern Korea. According to old maps, “a land to the east of T’ang and to the west of Katsu” would indicate Japan.
40. The Outstanding Principles of the Lotus Sutra.
41. This story appears in the Causality of Past and Present Sutra.
42. Reference is to a document in which Emperor Wu (464–549), the first ruler of the Liang dynasty, pledged not to follow the way of Taoism. It actually says that he would rather sink into the evil paths for a long period of time for going against Buddhism (yet nevertheless forming a bond with it) than be reborn in heaven by embracing the non-Buddhist teachings. This story appears in The Annotations on “Great Concentration and Insight.” Udraka Ramaputra was a hermit and master of yogic meditation, the second teacher under whom Shakyamuni practiced. He is said to have been reborn in the highest of the four realms in the world of formlessness.
43. All the men in this and the two preceding paragraphs comprise the twenty-four successors who are said to have inherited Shakyamuni’s lineage.
44. This passage refers to the “three standards of comparison” enumerated by
T’ien-t’ai to assert the superiority of the Lotus Sutra over other sutras. “Whether or not the process of instruction is revealed from beginning to end” corresponds to the second standard; “whether or not the original relationship between teacher [the Buddha] and disciple is clarified” corresponds to the third standard; and “which teachings would lead to enlightenment and which would not” corresponds to the first standard.

45. That is, the year C.E. 67, the traditional date for the introduction of Buddhism to China during the reign of Emperor Ming of the Later Han dynasty.

46. Here, “exoteric and esoteric teachings” refers to a classification of Shakymuni’s teachings according to the manner in which they were expounded: secret and otherwise. The secret teaching is here termed “esoteric,” while the others correspond to “exoteric.”

47. A designation by T’ien-t’ai of the different systems of classification used by different schools during the Northern and Southern Dynasties period.

48. A kingdom located in the southern foothills of the T’ien-shan Mountains. In 640 it was conquered by Emperor T’ai-tsung.

49. The traditional date for the introduction of Buddhism to Japan is in the thirteenth year of the reign of Emperor Kimmei (552).

50. Emperor Kimmei is now regarded as the twenty-ninth emperor, because the administration of the fifteenth ruler Empress Jingu is no longer considered a formal reign. In Nichiren Daishonin’s time, however, she was included in the lineage, so Emperor Kimmei was counted as the thirtieth sovereign.

51. Mention of Shan-wu-wei’s stay in Japan appears in A Brief History of Japan by the priest Koen (twelfth century) of Mount Hiei, and The Genko Era Biographies of Eminent Priests by the Zen priest Kukan Shiren (1278-1346). Though no conclusive proof exists that Shan-wu-wei actually journeyed to Japan, this tradition is thought to have been widely accepted in the Daishonin’s time.

52. The vow is to spread the correct teaching of Buddhism and lead the people to enlightenment.

53. This debate was held at Takaosan-ji temple in Kyoto in 802.

54. With “perfect meditation” and “perfect wisdom,” the Daishonin refers to the three types of learning: precepts, meditation, and wisdom. T’ien-t’ai devoted himself to meditation and wisdom based on the Lotus Sutra, yet continued to employ the Hinayana precepts.

55. The ordination ceremony in which one receives the ten major precepts and forty-eight minor precepts, as set forth in the Brahma Net Sutra. This ordination ceremony was held at Takaosan-ji temple in 805 for eight priests including Dosho and Shuen.

56. Hui-tsung (1082-1135) and Ch’ien-tsung (1100-1161) were the eighth and ninth emperors of the Northern Sung dynasty. The “northern barbarians” were Jurchen, a nomadic people of Manchuria, who established the Chin dynasty in northern China. They captured the Sung capital of K’ai-feng in 1126.

57. Kao-tsung (1107-1187) was the first emperor of the Southern Sung dynasty. Lin-an is the present-day city of Hangzhou.

58. This refers to the Mongol invasion of 1274.

59. Immeasurable Meanings Sutra.

60. Lotus Sutra, chap. 2.

61. On the Nirvana Sutra.

62. Damuna (Sanskrit unknown) was a king of Kashmir in India who destroyed the Buddhist temples and stupas in his kingdom. It is said that, when he killed the Buddhist teacher Aryasimha, he lost his right arm and died seven days later.

63. Fa-tao (1086-1147) was a priest of Sung China. When Emperor Hui-tsung, a Taoist follower, acted to suppress Buddhism, Fa-tao renounced with him but was branded on the face and exiled to Tao-chou. He was later pardoned, but Hui-tsung was captured by the invading Chin forces and taken to Manchuria, where he lived until his death in 1135.

64. The outermost of eight concentric circular mountain ranges said to surround Mount Sumeru. Here it is mentioned to suggest impregnability.

65. The Precious Key to the Secret Treasury.

66. Lotus Sutra, chap. 17.

67. Ibid., chap. 11.

68. Ibid., chap. 14.

69. Ibid., chap. 26.

70. Ibid., chap. 14.

71. The earthquake refers to that of the
twenty-third day of the eighth month in 1257, and the comet, to a comet that appeared on the fifth day of the seventh month in 1264.

72. The appearance of Nagarjuna after Shakyamuni’s death is predicted in the Maya Sutra and the Lankavatara Sutra.

73. The four-phrase verse referred to is: “We speak of all things as ‘empty’ / which are dependent on origination. / They are no more than ‘existence in name only.’ / This is the Middle Way.”

74. The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra.

75. Great Concentration and Insight.

76. The Annotations on “The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra.”

77. A passage to this effect appears in The Supplement to T’ien-t’ai’s Three Major Works by a Sung T’ien-t’ai scholar Ts’ung-i, though the exact quotation has not been found.

78. A Comparison of Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism.

79. “Actual events” refers to events mentioned in the Lotus Sutra. For example, in chapter 3, the Buddha predicted that Shariputra would in the future attain enlightenment as a Buddha called Flower Glow. Chapter 12 depicts the attainment of Buddhahood by the dragon king’s daughter and predicts the future enlightenment of an evil person, Devadatta.

80. The translations made before Hsüan-tsang (602–664) are called “old translations.” His and subsequent translations are known as “new translations.”

81. The Liang Dynasty Biographies of Eminent Priests.

82. On “The Words and Phrases.” “The sage” referred to here is Vasubandhu. Miao-lo attributed an error in Vasubandhu’s commentary on the Lotus Sutra, The Treatise on the Lotus Sutra, to the translator. In this context, the Daishonin employs Miao-lo’s statement to indicate the Buddha. Thus, he says in the following paragraph, “that is not to be attributed to any fault of the Buddha.”

83. The first guideline, “causes and conditions,” is to interpret the words and phrases of the sutra in terms of the causes and conditions that prompted the Buddha to expound them; the second, “correlated teachings,” to interpret the sutra’s words and phrases in terms of the four teachings of doctrine and the five periods; the third,

“the theoretical and essential teachings,” to interpret them in light of the theoretical and essential teachings of the Lotus Sutra; and the fourth, “the observation of the mind,” to perceive the truth within one’s own mind through the practice of meditation.

84. This passage refers to the Chinese maxim that a sage appears only once in a thousand years, and a worthy man, only once in five hundred years.

85. This statement appears in The One Hundred Records of the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai, compiled by Chang-an, T’ien-t’ai’s successor.

86. The Biography of the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai Chih-che of the Sui Dynasty. Tao-hsiian (596–667) was the founder of the Nan-shan branch of the Precepts school.


88. The story of Han-kuang, Pu-k’ung, and the Indian monk appears in The Sung Dynasty Biographies of Eminent Priests under the biography of Han-kuang (n.d.), who is counted among the six major disciples of Pu-k’ung.

89. On “The Words and Phrases.” The people of the state of Lu failed to recognize the greatness of Confucius. Hence those who are not aware of the greatness of T’ien-t’ai’s teachings are compared to the people of Lu.

90. The ordination platforms at Todai-ji temple in Nara, Yakushi-ji in Shimotsuke Province, and Kanzeon-ji in Kyushu.

91. Lotus Sutra, chap. 11.

92. Four teachings and the five teachings: Classifications of the Buddha’s teachings. Both of these doctrines rank the Flower Garland Sutra and the Lotus Sutra first.

93. The ruler refers here to Emperor Kammu. This sentence indirectly praises Dengyo, who revealed and upheld the truth of the Lotus Sutra during Emperor Kammu’s time.

94. This means that the Three Great Secret Laws are apparent in the passages of the Lotus Sutra when the sutra is read in light of its essential truth.

95. This indicates how difficult it was to reach India from China at that time. Hsüan-tsang is said to have died and been reborn six times on his perilous journey to India.

96. For three asamkhya kalpas, bodhi-
sattvas carry out the six paramitas and ten thousand practices to benefit others and attain near-perfect enlightenment. Shakya-
muni was born in a past life as Prince Satt-
va and gave his body to a starving tigress to
save her and her cubs. He was then able to
obtain “the unseen crown of the Buddha’s
head,” one of a Buddha’s eighty characteristics.

97. The “three important concerns”
refers to the refutation of the Nembutsu,
Zen, and True Word doctrines, which are
explained subsequently.

98. This refers to one of the eight won-
ders of the ocean described in the Nirvana
Sutra. The “body of a dead person” repres-
ents ichchantikas, persons of incorrigible
disbelief; monks who commit the four unpardonable offenses of killing, theft, sex-
ual intercourse, and lying; people who
commit the five cardinal sins; and those
who slander the Mahayana teachings.

99. Reference is to a passage in the
Flower Garland Sutra, in which the god of
the earth refuses to protect three types of
persons: those who cause the death of their
king, those who are unfilial toward their
parents, and those who deny the law of
cause and effect or slander the three trea-
ures of Buddhism.

100. Prince Dojo, a son of Emperor
Gotoba who had entered the priesthood.
This generally means the title of a retired
emperor or prince who entered the priest-
hood and lived at Ninna-ji, a True Word
temple in Kyoto. Omuro is another name
for Ninna-ji.

101. The supervisors refer here to those
of the head temple of the True Word
school at Mount Koya, Kumano Shrine,
and elsewhere.

102. The sacred mirror is one of the
three divine symbols of the Japanese impe-
rial throne, the others being the sword and
the jewel. The mirror was lost in a fire in
960.

103. The sword was lost in 1185 at the
battle of Dannoura, in which the Min-
moto clan defeated the Taira.

104. The five honored ones refer to theive wisdom kings of the esoteric True Word
teachings. They are Immovable; Conqueror
of the Threefold World; Kundali; Great
Awesome Virtue; and Diamond Yaksha.
Depicted as angry figures, they are said to
conquer obstacles.

105. According to The Treatise on the
Great Perfection of Wisdom, a kalpa is longer
than the time required to wear away a cube
of stone 40 ri (one ri is about 600 meters)
on each side, if a heavenly nymph alights
on it and brushes it with a piece of cloth
once every hundred years.

106. Kenshin (1130–1192) was the sixty-
first chief priest of Enryaku-ji. He conver-
ted to the Pure Land teachings while still
the chief priest of a Tendai temple.

107. Honen was exiled to Tosa in 1207
by the Retired Emperor Gotoba, who was
later unsuccessful in his attempt to rebel
against the Kamakura shogunate, an inci-
dent known as the Jokyu Disturbance.

108. In 819 Dengyo expressed to the
emperor his desire that a Mahayana ordina-
tion platform be built on Mount Hiei. His
request provoked intense opposition from
the priests of the six schools in Nara.

Dengyo sailed to China in the same fleet,
though on a different ship.

110. The Flower Garland school adopts
a comparative classification called the “ten
doctrines,” ranking the Flower Garland
teachings in the tenth and highest place,
and the Lotus Sutra in the ninth. Kobo,
imitating the “ten doctrines,” formulated
the “ten stages of the mind.” The tenth stage
is the stage of the realization of esoteric
truth, that is, Buddhahood. Kobo asserted
that only the True Word school’s teachings
 correspond to this stage and relegated the
Flower Garland and Tendai doctrines to the
ninth and eighth stages, respectively.

111. Precious Key to the Secret Treasury.
This statement implies that each of the
many schools claims to be the vehicle of
Buddhahood, but that their doctrines prove
to be shallow when compared with the
doctrine of the True Word school.

112. Ibid. This statement represents a
comparison of Shakya Buddha and
Mahavairochana Buddha.

113. Exoteric and Esoteric. On the basis
of the Six Paramitas Sutra, Kobo divided all
the Buddhist teachings into five categories,
which he compared to the five flavors of
fresh milk, cream, curdled milk, butter, and
 ghee. He likened the Mahayana sutras,
including the Lotus Sutra, to the fourth fla-
or, butter, and the True Word teachings,
to ghee, the finest flavor.

114. Ibid. Kobo especially slanders
T'ien-t'ai, who set forth “the five periods
and eight teachings” and compared the
period of the Lotus and the Nirvana sutras to the finest flavor of ghee. Kobo on this basis accused T'ien-t'ai of stealing the True Word doctrine.

115. Prajna (Chin Pan-jo) was a native of Kashmir who arrived in Canton in 781 and in Ch'ang-an in 790. He translated a large number of works, including the Six Paramitas Sutra.

116. The Dharma Characteristics priest Tokuitsu's condemnation is cited in Dengyo's Essay on the Protection of the Nation. Dengyo's rebuttal also appears in the same work.

117. Treatise on the Lotus Sutra.
118. Great Perfection of Wisdom.
119. "Others" refers to Shakyamuni, Nagarjuna, Vasubandhu, and others who compared the Lotus Sutra to ghee.

120. These anecdotes are mentioned in Records of the Historian. Tan, the Duke of Chou, was a younger brother of Emperor Wu of the Chou dynasty. He implemented a number of reforms in state affairs and established a firm foundation for the dynasty. He was so eager to find able persons and anxious not to overlook anyone that he would receive visitors even while washing his hair or during the course of a meal. The Daishonin cites this example to explain the importance of being conscientious.

121. Shokaku-bo is another name for Kakuban (1095–1143), the precursor of the New Doctrine branch of the True Word school. Demo-in was the temple he established on Mount Koya. After it was moved to Negoro, it became the head temple of the New Doctrine branch.

122. In this quotation, the Buddha of the Nondual Mahayana refers to Mahavairochana Buddha, who represents the essential oneness of the Womb and Diamond Realms. The three-bodied donkey- or ox-Buddha refers to Shakyamuni Buddha, who expounded the esoteric teachings. The three bodies of a Buddha are the Dharma body, the reward body, and the manifested body. The twofold mandala refers to the Diamond Realm and Womb Realm mandalas, the objects of devotion of the esoteric teachings.

123. The following story, including the details concerning the Scholar Bhadraruchi, is based on a passage in The Record of the Western Regions.

124. The consecration ceremony in which water is poured on the head of the person to be initiated.

125. Presumably a reference to The Record of the Buddha and the Patriarchs of Various Dynasties, which relates how, when Emperor Su-tsung of the T'ang dynasty asked the priest Hui-chung about the meditation in which there is no distinction between self and others, Hui-chung replied that the emperor should step on the head of the Buddha.

126. San-chieh, more commonly known as Hsin-hsing (540–594), was the founder of the San-chieh, or Three Stages, school that flourished during the Sui dynasty. Hsin-hsing, basing his calculations on one of the many theories concerning the matters that existed at that time, claimed that the Latter Day of the Law had arrived in 550. He also asserted that, in this degenerate world, there was no alternative other than to practice a universal teaching that did not distinguish the efficacy of various sutras. He held that the Buddha nature was inherent in all sentient beings. The school acquired enormous wealth that was eventually confiscated; it was banned in 713.

127. As for the other five schools, Annen ranked the Three Treatises school fifth, the Dharma Characteristics school sixth, the Precepts school seventh, the Establishment of Truth school eighth, and the Dharma Analysis Treasury school ninth.

128. Also called Ichijo Shikan-in. Another name for Kompon Chudo, the main temple building on Mount Hiei.

129. The True Word priests: Tsung-jui, Ch'uan-ya, Yüan-cheng, I-ch'en, Fa-ch'üan, Pan-yüeh, K'an, and Wei-chin.

130. Kuang-hsiu (771–843) was the eighth patriarch in the lineage of the T'ien-t'ai school in China. He was a disciple of T'ao-sui, one of the Chinese teachers of the Great Teacher Dengyo. Wei-chüan (n.d.) was Kuang-hsiu's disciple.

131. The Toto area is one of the three areas into which Mount Hiei is divided, the two others being Saito and Yokawa. The Toto, the main area, encompasses Kompon Chudo (Shikan-in), the origin of the later established Enryaku-ji, and other large buildings. Jikaku founded Soji-in in this area in 851 as a center for esoteric practice.

132. Nirvana Sutra.
133. The Commentary on the Ten Stages Sutra.
134. Profound Meaning.
135. Outstanding Principles.
136. Tradition has it that a five-foot image of the Buddha made by Udayana, a king of Kaushambi in India during Shakyamuni's time, walked about, and that a painting of the Buddha by Kashyapa Matanga preached the sutras. In Japan Genko Era Biographies relates how an image of Bodhisattva Maitreya in a temple of Yamato Province alerted a guard when it was about to be stolen, and how an image of the Buddha Medicine Master enshrined at Teiden-ji temple in Totomi Province called out to be rescued from the bottom of a river, and thus was saved.

137. Subhadra was the last disciple of Shakyamuni Buddha, converted immediately before the Buddha’s passing. According to Great Perfection of Wisdom, Subhadra had a dream in which all people were deprived of their eyesight, the sun fell from the sky, the seas ran dry, and Mount Sumeru was toppled by a great wind. He awoke, seized with fear. When Subhadra could not determine the meaning of the dream, a heavenly being appeared and told him that the Buddha would enter nirvana that night. Subhadra accordingly went to Shakyamuni to receive instruction in his teachings.

138. “Sun Seed” is another name for Shakyamuni, which appears in the Sutra of the Collected Stories of the Buddha’s Deeds in Past Lives. When Shakyamuni was born, his father had a Brahman make a prophecy concerning the child’s future. At that time the Brahman named the baby Sun Seed.

139. A reference to the Mongol invasion of 1274, a year before The Selection of the Time was written.

140. The retired emperors Juntoku and Tsuchimikado, the sons of Gotoba, were exiled to the island of Sado and to Tosa Province, respectively.

141. Lotus Sutra, chap. 25.

142. The priests of Mount Hiei had also performed esoteric prayer rituals for the defeat of the Kamakura shogunate.

143. The Daishonin refers to the natural disasters that ravaged Japan at this time. They are enumerated in his Rationale for Writing “On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land.”

144. This refers to the Mongol invasion.

145. Such rebellions are represented by the unsuccessful coup d’etat staged by Hojo Tokisuke against his younger half brother, Regent Hojo Tokimune, in 1272.

146. The eight schools (Three Treatises, Dharma Characteristics, Flower Garland, Dharma Analysis Treasury, Establishment of Truth, Precepts, Tendai, and True Word), plus the Zen and Pure Land.

147. This statement appears in Miao-lo’s On “The Words and Phrases.”

148. This story appears in the Protection Sutra. King Kriki was the father of Kashyapa Buddha, the sixth of seven Buddhas of the past, the last of whom is Shakyamuni. One day, he dreamed about ten monkeys. Nine of the monkeys harassed the people of the city, robbed them of their food and drink, and went on a destructive rampage. One of the ten, however, would not join them but remained sitting in a tree. He was therefore tormented and expelled from the community of monkeys. When King Kriki asked Kashyapa Buddha about this dream, the Buddha said, “It represents the evil latter age after the death of Shakyamuni Buddha. The ten monkeys represent his ten kinds of disciples, only one of whom is a true shramana (practitioner) who renounces the world and endeavors to seek the way.”

149. King Mihirakula, according to Record of the Western Regions, attacked Balditya, a king of Magadha, who was a Buddhist, but was instead captured by him. Released through the intercession of Balditya’s merciful mother, Mihirakula fled to Kashmir and later killed its king. He went on to attack Gandhara where he destroyed temples and stupas. As a result, when he was about to die, the earth trembled and a storm arose, and he fell into the hell of incessant suffering.

150. Wu-tsong (814–846) was the fifteenth emperor of the T’ang dynasty. He initiated a nationwide persecution of Buddhism in 845 during the Hui-ch’ang era.

151. Dengyo’s Clarification of the Precepts likens the scholars of the six Nara schools to six kinds of worms who devour and destroy the Buddha’s teaching.

152. Taira no Munemori (1147–1183) was a leader of the Heike clan who held a high position at court. When the Heike fought with the Genji clan at Dannoura, he was captured and had to humiliate himself before Kajiwara Kagetoki (d. 1200), a Genji warrior who was originally from the Heike clan.
153. Yadoya Mitsunori (n.d.) was an official of the Kamakura government. He is said to have been one of the seven individuals permitted access to the lay priest of Sainyo-ji, Hojo Tokiyori, when the latter was on his deathbed.

154. Here the Daishonin purposely mentions the burning of temples and the execution of priests in order to impress Hei no Saemon with the gravity of the offense of slandering the correct teaching. In *On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land*, however, the Daishonin explains the meaning of the Nirvana Sutra that describes the killing of slanderous monks. He says, “According to the Buddhist teachings, prior to Shakyamuni slanderous monks would have incurred the death penalty. But since the time of Shakyamuni, the One Who Can Endure, the giving of alms to slanderous monks is forbidden in the sutra teachings” (p. 23). He admonished the acting regent to abandon the government support of the Nembutsu and Zen priests who contradicted Shakyamuni Buddha’s teaching. If they did not, he said, Japan would face destruction.

155. Lotus Sutra, chap. 2.

156. The incident involving the scroll of the fifth volume of the Lotus Sutra occurred when Hei no Saemon came with his men to arrest the Daishonin at Mutsu-bagayatsu on the twelfth day of the ninth month, 1271. The fifth volume contains the “Encouraging Devotion” chapter, which predicts that the votaries of the Lotus Sutra will be attacked with swords and staves and will face the three powerful enemies.

157. “Great Man” is an epithet of the Buddha.

158. This story is related in *Record of the Western Regions*. Gunaprabhā first learned the Mahayana teachings but later regressed to the Hinayana teachings. When he met with Maitreya in the Tushita heaven, he was so arrogant that he refused to receive instruction from him.

159. The Iron Belly Brahman was an arrogant Brahman in southern India who asserted that he possessed all types of wisdom within his belly. Fearful that it would burst, he tied iron sheet metal around it.

160. *Outstanding Principles*.

161. Lotus Sutra, chap. 23.

162. Ibid.

163. The bodhisattva to whom Shakyamuni addressed his preaching in the Profound Secrets Sutra.

164. Nagabodhi was the fourth of the first eight patriarchs of the True Word school. There are differing views concerning him, and some scholars even deny that he actually existed.

165. Satavahanā was a king of southern India who appeared about seven centuries after Shakyamuni’s passing. He was converted to Nagarjuna’s teachings, and protected and supported Mahayana Buddhism.

166. Kashyapa is the bodhisattva addressed by Shakyamuni in the “Bodhisattva Kashyapa” chapter of the Nirvana Sutra. The fifty-two types of beings are those who gathered at the assembly of the Nirvana Sutra.

167. These ten eminent priests, including Fa-yün (467–529), ranked the Flower Garland Sutra first, the Nirvana Sutra second, and the Lotus Sutra third.

168. Lotus Sutra, chap. 23.

169. Ibid.

170. *Outstanding Principles*.

171. A *Clarification of the Schools Based on T'ien-t'ai's Doctrine*.

172. Lotus Sutra, chap. 3.

173. Ibid., chap. 28.

174. Ibid.

175. Ibid., chap. 13.

176. Ibid.

177. *On “The Words and Phrases.”*