WITh all due respect, I wish to make the following announcement. On the eighteenth day of the first month of this year, an official announcement was received from the western barbarians, the great Mongol Empire. This accords precisely and without the slightest deviation with the prediction I made in my *On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land*, the work that I, Nichiren, compiled some years ago on the basis of key passages from the various sutras. Nichiren is thus in some sense a sage, for a sage is one who knows those things that have not yet made their appearance.

Accordingly, I take this opportunity once more to deliver a respectful warning. You must cease at once to lend your support to Kenchō-ji, Jufuku-ji, Gokuraku-ji, Tahō-ji, Jōkōmyō-ji, Dai-butsu-den, and other temples. If you do not do so, you will assuredly invite attack not only from the Mongols but from lands in all the four directions. You must act quickly to overcome and subdue the men of the Mongol nation and bring peace and security to our land. And the task of subduing them cannot be accomplished without the help of Nichiren.

While the nation has a minister who will speak out in reprimand, that nation will be set on its proper course; and while a family has a son who will argue with his parents, the family will be saved. The fate of the nation depends upon the correctness of its government policies. And the validity of Buddhist teachings may be determined by consulting the bright mirror embodied in the sutra texts.

This land is a land of the gods, and the gods will not condone what is not in accord with correct behavior. The seven reigns of the heavenly gods, the five reigns of the earthly gods, and the other gods and benevolent deities are divine beings who guard and protect the one vehicle teachings. Thus the Lotus Sutra is their food and uprightness is their strength.

The Lotus Sutra states, “The Buddhas, saviors of the world, abide in their great transcendental powers, and in order to please living beings they display immeasurable supernatural powers.” When a nation casts aside the one vehicle teachings, how could the benevolent deities fail to display anger?

The Benevolent Kings Sutra says, “Once the sages have departed, then the seven disasters are certain to arise.” The king of Wu failed to heed Wu Tzu-hsü’s words of warning and thereby brought about his own destruction. The evil rulers Chieh and Chou put
to death their loyal ministers Kuan Lung-feng and Pi Kan and as a result lost their thrones. And now Japan is about to be seized by the men of the Mongol nation. Is this not cause for distress? Is this not cause for alarm?

If you fail to heed the warnings of Nichiren, you will surely regret it later. For Nichiren is the envoy of the Lotus Sutra. The Lotus Sutra says, “He... is the envoy of the Thus Come One. He has been dispatched by the Thus Come One and carries out the Thus Come One’s work.” And the work of the Buddhas of the three existences of past, present, and future is the Lotus Sutra.

I have sent letters of warning to various other persons, and it is my hope that you may summon them all, discuss the matter, and let me know your judgment on it.

In effect, the different types of prayers that are being offered up should be suspended, and the representatives of the various schools should be summoned into your presence so that they may debate with me to decide what is correct and what is incorrect in matters of Buddhist doctrine.

There may be fine pine trees growing in the depths of the valley, but if the skilled carpenter is unaware of their existence, he may err in his choice of material. There may be a person in the dark who is dressed in beautiful brocade, but if others fail to recognize him, this is due to their own stupidity.

In the three countries of India, China, and Japan, the question of correctness in matters of Buddhist doctrine was decided by the ruler, that is, by King Ajātashatru in the case of India, by the rulers of the Ch’en and Sui dynasties in the case of China, and by Emperor Kammu in the case of Japan.

I am not urging any private or prejudiced view of my own; I speak solely out of motives of intense loyalty. I do not speak out for my own sake, but for the sake of the gods, for the sake of the ruler, for the sake of the nation, and for the sake of all living beings.

With my deep respect,

Nichiren

The eleventh day of the tenth month in the fifth year of Bun’ei [1268], cyclical sign tsuchiinoe-tatsu

Respectfully presented to the lay priest Yadoya

Background

As explained in the background of the preceding letter, that addressed to the lay priest Yadoya [Saemon Mitsunori], Nichiren Daishonin wrote eleven letters to the political and religious leaders of the time on the eleventh day of the tenth month in 1268. These are collectively known as “the eleven letters of remonstrance.” In this volume, they are writings Nos. 195–205. This is the first of them, which the Daishonin sent to Hōjō Tokimune, the eighth regent of the Kamakura shogunate and effective ruler of Japan, via his close aide the lay priest Yadoya.

Tokimune was only eighteen at the time of this letter, and having assumed leadership of the nation at this young age, was suddenly confronted with the threat of attack from abroad. With the arrival of the missive from the Mongols demanding fealty and threatening invasion if their demand was not met, the shogunate was astounded. The Mongols had already extended their control over the Korean Peninsula. In this let-
ter, the Daishonin points out that the prediction of foreign invasion he made in his treatise *On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land*, which he submitted to Tokimune’s father, Tokiyori, in 1260, had come true. He strongly admonishes Tokimune that, in order to avert disaster, he must withdraw his support of erroneous Buddhist schools and temples. He calls for a public debate in the presence of the regent, saying, “The different types of prayers that are being offered up should be suspended, and the representatives of the various schools should be summoned into your presence so that they may debate with me to decide what is correct and what is incorrect in matters of Buddhist doctrine.” He closes by indicating that his statements are not self-serving, but made only with the well-being of the nation and its people in mind.

The eleven addressees were Hōjō Tokimune, Yadoya Saemon Mitsunori, Hei no Saemon-no-jō Yoritsuna, Hōjō Yagenta, Dōryū of Kenchō-ji temple, Ryōkan of Gokuraku-ji temple, the superintendent of Daibutsu-den temple, Jufuku-ji temple, Jōkōmyō-ji temple, Tahō-ji temple, and Chōraku-ji temple. The letters in this volume appear in the above order of recipients. At the same time, the Daishonin wrote a letter to his disciples and lay believers, informing them of these eleven letters of remonstrance and warning them to be prepared to meet any persecution that might arise as a consequence.

**Notes**

1. Temples in Kamakura. Tahō-ji no longer exists, but in light of *The Letter of Petition from Yorimoto* (I, p. 808), it appears to have been a large temple of the True Word Precepts school under the supervision of Ryōkan. Jōkōmyō-ji was built in 1251 by Hōjō Nagatoki, later the sixth regent of the Kamakura shogunate. The first chief priest was Shin’ā, and the doctrines of the True Word, Tendai, Zen, and Precepts schools were studied there. Later it became a temple of the True Word school. Daibutsu-den was a temple of the Pure Land school built to house a great statue of Amida Buddha, which is known as Kōtoku-in. For Kenchō-ji, Jufuku-ji, and Gokuraku-ji, see Glossary.

2. Lotus Sutra, chap. 21.

3. The king of Wu is Fu-ch’a (d. 473 B.C.E.), the twenty-fifth ruler of the state of Wu. His father was killed by Kou-chien, king of the state of Yüeh, and Fu-ch’a took revenge two years later by defeating him in battle. Kou-chien proposed a peaceful settlement with Fu-ch’a, but behind the scenes planned to attack the state of Wu again. Wu Tzu-hšü, a loyal minister of Fu-ch’a, saw through the plot and urged the king to kill Kou-chien, but the king would not listen. Instead, he compelled Wu Tzu-hšü to commit suicide in 485 B.C.E., and twelve years later Fu-ch’a was killed by King Kou-chien.

4. Lotus Sutra, chap. 10.

5. “The rulers of the Ch’en and Sui dynasties” refer to Emperor Shu-pao, the fifth and last sovereign of the Ch’en dynasty (557–589), and Emperor Yang, the second sovereign of the Sui dynasty (581–618), respectively. It is said that they summoned the Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai to debate with the leading priests of the ten schools and settle questions of doctrine, and that in consequence, the priests all discarded distorted views their schools had upheld for five hundred years and became followers of T’ien-t’ai’s teachings. And in Japan, during the reign of Emperor Kammu (737–806), in an official debate, the Great Teacher Den-gyō refuted the leaders of the six schools of Nara, and clarified the significance of the Lotus Sutra.

6. Though the written addressee of this letter is the lay priest Yadoya Mitsunori, it is clear from the contents that it was addressed to the regent Hōjō Tokimune. The Daishonin asked Yadoya to pass this letter on to the regent.