WITH regard to the official announcement that arrived from the Mongol nation, I have respectfully submitted my views to the regent in writing. The prophecies that I, Nichiren, made some years ago in my treatise, *On Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land*, have been fulfilled without the slightest discrepancy. Nevertheless, I have once again submitted petitions in hopes of dispelling the gloom and foreboding that hang over us. I have sent these flags of warning to the public authorities, and have challenged various private parties to engage with me in debate.

You are a veritable roof beam of the nation, you act as hands and feet for the multitude of people. How can you fail to be distressed by the downfall that threatens our land? How can you be unconcerned?

You must therefore act with haste to correct the situation and to punish those who are guilty of slandering the correct teaching!

The Lotus Sutra of the Wonderful Law, the single vehicle, embodies the ultimate truth of the correct enlightenment of the Buddhas; it is the food that sustains the majesty of the heavenly gods and benevolent deities. How could one who embraces and has faith in it ever be visited by the seven disasters and the three calamities? But for simply stating this fact, I, Nichiren, have been condemned to exile. How could the sun and moon, the stars and constellations, refrain from punishing such an act?

Prince Shōtoku overthrew Moriya, the evil opponent of Buddhism, and caused the teachings of the Buddha to prosper; Hidesato defeated the rebel Masakado¹ and left his name for later generations to remember. And if you will do likewise, curbing the power of those temples and priests you have supported in the past, who are in fact sworn enemies of the Lotus Sutra, then the benevolent deities will surely grant you their aid and protection.

*The Formulary of Adjudications*² makes it abundantly clear that unprincipled actions are to be curbed and brought to an end. Why, then, have my anguish-ed petitions not been heeded? Does this not violate the pledge of fidelity that appears at the end of *Formulary of Adjudications*?

I have taken the liberty of writing letters to this effect to various persons, eleven letters in all, addressed to the lord of Kamakura [the regent Hōjō Tokimune]; to the lay priest Yadoya; to the chief priests of Kenchō-ji, Jufuku-ji, Gokuraku-ji, Daibutsu-den, Chōraku-ji, Taho-ji, and Jōkōmyō-ji;³ to Hōjō Ōagenta;⁴ and to you with this
letter. Each of the parties addressed will surely submit the matter to discussion, and I am hopeful of receiving speedy responses from all.

If so, then Pien Ho’s rough stone may be polished to reveal a beautiful gem, and the priceless jewel concealed in the topknot of the Dharma king may at that time come to light.

I do not say this for my own sake. It is 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 that I make bold to speak out in this fashion.

With my deep respect,
Nichiren

The eleventh day of the tenth month in the fifth year of Bun’ei [1268], cyclical sign tsuchinoe-tatsu
To Hei no Saemon-no-jō

Background

One of eleven letters of remonstrance, this is addressed to Hei no Saemon-no-jō Yoritsuna, also known as Taira no Yoritsuna. (Hei is an alternative pronunciation of the character Taira). He was the deputy chief of the Office of Military and Police Affairs of the Kamakura shogunate. The chief was the regent, Hōjō Tokimune.

Notes

1. Fujiwara no Hidesato joined forces with Taira no Sadamori, a cousin of Taira no Masakado, to defeat Masakado. Masakado was a distinguished warrior of the Taira clan who exercised great power in eastern Japan. He attacked government offices in Kanto and adopted the title of “New Emperor” in late 939, but shortly thereafter his forces were routed, and he was killed by Sadamori and Hidesato.

2. One of the most important law codes in Japanese history, which the Kamakura government established for its warrior vassals in the first year of Jōei (1232). This formulary, composed of 51 articles, remained effective from the thirteenth through the mid-nineteenth centuries.

3. Chōraku-ji was a large temple of the Pure Land school and one of the seven major temples in Kamakura. For Kenchō-ji, Jufuku-ji, and Gokuraku-ji, see Glossary, and for Daibutsu-den, Tōhō-ji, and Jōkō-myō-ji, see p. 316, n. 1.

4. Hōjō Yagenta, an official who belonged to the ruling Hōjō clan and a lay follower of the Daishonin in Kamakura. He was a recipient in 1274 of The Swords of Good and Evil (I, p. 451), and in 1268 of one of the eleven letters of remonstrance from the Daishonin.

5. Pien Ho was a native of the state of Ch’u in China during the Spring and Autumn period (770–403 B.C.E.). According to Han Fei Tzu, he found a precious stone at Mount Ching and presented it to King Li. When the king had it appraised, it was identified as a mere stone. As punishment, the king had Pien Ho’s left leg cut off at the knee. After the king’s death, Pien Ho again presented the precious stone, this time to King Wu. Once again he was accused of deception and had his right leg cut off at the knee. Later, after King Wen had ascended the throne, Pien Ho wept for three days at the foot of Mount Ch’u, holding the precious stone and shedding tears of blood because of the king’s ignorance. Hearing of this, King Wen asked for Pien Ho’s stone and had it polished. It was then recognized as being a genuine gem.

6. This story appears in chapter fourteen of the Lotus Sutra. The “priceless jewel” indicates the one Buddha vehicle.