

Filial Sons



CAN what I have heard about your beloved father having passed away possibly be true? Because you and your brother, Tayū no Sakan, were born in the Latter Day of the Law in a remote land far from the birthplace of Buddhism and took faith in the great Law of the Lotus, there could be no doubt that evil demons would take possession of those such as the ruler of the country and your parents and attempt to harass you. Indeed, you were disowned by your father several times, but perhaps because you and your brother are the reincarnations of Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye, or due to the consideration of Medicine King and Medicine Superior, in the end your father forgave you with no ill effects. And having carried through with the filial resolve you had made before, how

could you be anything other than filial sons? The heavenly gods will surely bring you joy, and the Lotus Sutra and the ten demon daughters must also approve.

Moreover, there is something I sense deep in my heart about you. If this teaching spreads exactly as the sutra says, then I will express my joy.

You brothers must make sure to keep on good terms with one another. I have written in detail in my letter to Tayū no Sakan, so please ask him about it.

With my deep respect,
Nichiren

The twenty-first day in the second month of the second year of Kōan [1279]



Background

Nichiren Daishonin wrote this letter at Minobu on the twenty-first day of the second month in 1279 to Ikegami Hyōe no Sakan Munenaga in Musashi Province. Having received a report that Hyōe no Sakan's father, Yasumitsu, had passed away, he conveys his condolences. Though Yasumitsu had vigor-

ously opposed the belief of Hyōe no Sakan and his older brother, Tayū no Sakan Munenaka, in the Lotus Sutra, he later converted to the Lotus because of the brothers' unity in faith. The Daishonin praises them for carrying out their filial resolve.