I HAVE received the fifty slabs of steamed rice cake, one string of dried persimmons, and one bucket of syrup that you sent me. I have written you so many times in the past to thank you for your kindness that my writing brush is worn out and my fingers will no longer move.

Can we count the number of raindrops that fall in a major world system in the space of seven days? Or does anyone know the number of dust particles in the vast lands that make up the worlds of the ten directions? But the benefits one gains by making offerings even to one word of the Lotus Sutra—these, the Buddha says, are truly hard to measure. This you must keep ever in mind!

With my deep respect,
Nichiren

The twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month
Reply to the lay nun of Kubo

Background

Nichiren Daishonin wrote this letter at Minobu in the twelfth month of 1279, and sent it to the lay nun of Kubo, who lived in Suruga Province. In the several letters he sent her that are known today, the Daishonin repeatedly praises the lay nun’s sincerity and faith. This is obvious from his statement in this letter, “I have written you so many times in the past to thank you for your kindness.”

The Daishonin then suggests that even if one could count the raindrops and dust particles in countless worlds, one could never measure the benefits that come from making offerings to even a single word of the Lotus Sutra.