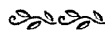


On the Benefits of the Daimoku



WITH regard to benefits, if we compare their benefits, the benefits of the former¹ are like the dirt that can be piled on a fingernail, while the benefits of the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra are like the earth in the ten directions. The benefits of the former are like one drop of water, while the benefits of the daimoku are like the

vast ocean. The benefits of the former are like shards and rubble, while the benefits of the daimoku are like gold and silver. The benefits of the former are like the light of a firefly, while those of the daimoku are like the sun and the moon—so the sutra passages² tell us.



Background

The date and recipient of this letter are unknown, as only this fragment remains. Nichiren Daishonin states that the practice of the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra, or Nam-myoho-enge-kyo,

yields incomparably greater benefits than the practices of the provisional sutras taught by the Buddha before he expounded the Lotus Sutra.

Notes

1. “The former” refers to the teachings that Shakyamuni Buddha expounded during the first forty-two years of his preaching life, from the time following his enlightenment up until he began to expound

the Lotus Sutra.

2. These comparisons appear to be adapted from the “Medicine King” (23rd) chapter of the Lotus Sutra.