

## **DIALOGUE ON THE LOTUS SUTRA (50) THOSE WHO DEVOTE THEMSELVES TO KOSEN-RUFU RECEIVE THE “BENEFIT OF PROTECTION”**

This is the fiftieth installment of an ongoing discussion on the Lotus Sutra among SGI President Daisaku Ikeda, Soka Gakkai Study Department Chief Katsuji Saito and Vice Chiefs Takanori Endo and Haruo Suda. It appeared in the March 1999 issue of the *Daibyakurenge*, the Soka Gakkai study journal.

Those who embrace the Lotus Sutra are most respectable. The benefit gained by making offerings to and protecting the sutra’s practitioners is the same as that gained by making offerings to all Buddhas. And the offense of persecuting and slandering them is the same as that of persecuting and slandering all Buddhas. The “Dharani” (twenty-sixth) chapter explains the “pledge” of the Buddhist gods to courageously protect those who carry out the practice of kosen-rufu.

In this installment, the participants examine what it means to work for kosen-rufu with single-minded determination through a discussion of the vast benefit of chanting daimoku, the solid bond of mentor and disciple connecting the successive Soka Gakkai presidents, the meaning of *dharani*, and the sound of the Mystic Law resonating throughout the universe.

**DAISAKU IKEDA:** In July 1960, an outdoor training session was held for the Suiko-kai at Inubozaki, a cape with a well-known lighthouse in Chiba Prefecture. I hoped that participants in this event would themselves serve as lighthouses to illuminate the lives of all people. That was a little more than two years after President Toda’s death. I had just succeeded him as third Soka Gakkai president [in May 1960]. Most of the leadership of the organization was young.

I wanted Mr. Toda’s spirit to be carried on eternally by generations to come. Not knowing how long my health would hold up, I hoped to pass on his spirit to these youthful successors.

At night, we built a fire. The youth gathered in a circle around the crimson flames. We could have used flashlights instead, but I deliberately had them make a bonfire because I wanted to teach them that life is like a bonfire; that we ourselves need to burn bright so as to illuminate those around us. When the flame of faith is burning in the lives of leaders, all members can advance with peace of mind toward the same light. The day when people throughout Japan, throughout the world, will gather together in pursuit of justice with a sense of hope is definitely near.

I wanted those young people to know that as long as the bonfire of their lives continues to burn, as long as the flame of the Soka Gakkai spirit continues to blaze, kosen-rufu can be accomplished without fail. Among the people there, some lived true to their pledge to uphold these words, while others betrayed it.

I now wish to call out again: “Let your faith burn brightly! For only then is Buddhism truly alive.” Buddhism comes down to the human being; it is faith. It is not to be sought anywhere else. As long as the flame of faith burns in the SGI, the sacred enterprise of kosen-rufu to lead all people to happiness will continue to advance. How precious is the SGI! Let us dedicate our lives to protecting this wonderful organization! Should this flame

go out, the future of humankind will be plunged into darkness. We need also to be aware that all manner of obstacles will, as a matter of course, threaten to extinguish this flame like a strong gale. But the Daishonin says, "A strong wind makes a kalakula grow larger" (WND, 471).<sup>2</sup> Kalakulas are mythical insects that are said to swell in the wind, using its force to grow larger. In this way, we, too, must move forward, causing the flame of faith to burn all the more powerfully, the greater the obstacles we face. Wind will extinguish a small flame, but it will cause a large flame to burn with even greater intensity. Kosen-rufu is an eternal struggle. It is a great battle between good and evil, between the Buddha and all kinds of opposing negative forces.

In the "Dharani" (twenty-sixth) chapter of the Lotus Sutra, bodhisattvas, Buddhist gods and even demons, discerning the great passion for kosen-rufu that is alive in the Buddha's heart, one after another pledge: "I will support this great struggle!" "I will protect and serve with all my might those working to advance kosen-rufu!" Eagle Peak, where this scene takes place, is filled with their irrepressible enthusiasm. Such is the dramatic episode that the "Dharani" chapter describes.

Why don't we start our discussion by considering the chapter's basic outline?

## THE UNFATHOMABLE POWER OF DAIMOKU

The Buddha said to Medicine King, "If there are good men or good women who offer alms to Buddhas equal in number to the sands of eight hundred ten thousand million nayutas of Ganges, what is your opinion? The merit they gain will surely be great, will it not?"

"Very great, World-Honored One."

The Buddha said, "If there are good men or good women who, with regard to this sutra, can accept and uphold even one four-line verse, if they read and recite it, understand the principle, and practice it as the sutra directs, the benefits will be very many." (LS26, 307–8)<sup>3</sup>

**KATSUJI SAITO:** The "Dharani" chapter begins with Bodhisattva Medicine King asking Shakyamuni how much merit or benefit people can gain from accepting and upholding, reading and reciting, studying the meaning of or copying the Lotus Sutra.

Without replying to this query, Shakyamuni poses the following question to Bodhisattva Medicine King: "If there are good men or good women who offer alms to Buddhas equal in number to the sands of eight hundred ten thousand million nayutas of Ganges, what is your opinion? The merit they gain will surely be great, will it not?" (LS26, 307).

When Medicine King says that the benefit of such people will be very great indeed, Shakyamuni instructs him: "If there are good men or good women who, with regard to this sutra, can accept and uphold even one four-line verse, if they read and recite it, understand the principle, and practice it as the sutra directs, the benefits will be very many" (LS26, 308).

**HARUO SUDA:** He says that by accepting and upholding even a single verse of the Lotus Sutra, we will gain the same benefit as we would by making offerings to an infinite number of Buddhas. When you stop to think about it, this is remarkable.

**IKEDA:** How is this possible? It's because the Lotus Sutra is the source of the enlightenment of all the infinite numbers of Buddhas. In particular, the source of the

enlightenment of all Buddhas is the implicit teaching of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. This daimoku is the sutra's undiluted and pure essence.

**TAKANORI ENDO:** The Daishonin's Buddhism is truly incredible.

**IKEDA:** Therefore, we mustn't try to gauge the power of daimoku with our own limited state of life, thinking, "This must be all there is." The sutra says that the benefit of daimoku is beyond even the Buddha to fathom. For us to suppose that we understand its full scope is nothing short of arrogance. If we underestimate the infinite power of benefit of the Gohonzon owing to weak faith, then we will only be able to tap a minute portion of the Gohonzon's power.

Speaking at Toshima Public Hall in Tokyo, second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda would often say on numerous occasions: "If the benefit that I have received is as great as this hall, then the benefit all of you have received is no more than the size of my little finger."

Japan today is facing a difficult economic situation. For precisely that reason, I hope all of our members will acquire immense benefit now. I would like to see each one gain inexhaustible good fortune. When times are good, anyone can do well. It is when things get tough that we see what we are made of. That is when our faith is put to the test. It is important that we patiently strive to create hope.

**SAITO:** Bodhisattva Medicine King and the others present at the assembly are moved when they hear Shakyamuni expound the great benefit of the Lotus Sutra. Medicine King vows: "World Honored One, I will now give to those who preach the Law *dharani* spells, which will guard and protect them" (LS26, 308). With that, he begins to recite an incantation.

**ENDO:** It begins, "anye manye mane mamane chitte charite shame . . ." (LS26, 308) and so on, but I haven't the foggiest idea what it means!

**IKEDA:** After intoning this spell, Medicine King declares: "If anyone should assault or injure these teachers of the Law, then he will have assaulted and injured these Buddhas!" (LS26, 308). In other words, to persecute those who are working to accomplish kosen-rufu is to persecute all Buddhas.

**SUDA:** Hearing this, Shakyamuni praises him, saying: "Excellent, excellent, Medicine King! You keep these teachers of the Law in your compassionate thoughts, shield and guard them, and for that reason you pronounce these dharanis. They will bring great benefit to living beings" (LS26, 308).

**ENDO:** Essentially, protecting the practitioners of kosen-rufu brings great benefit to humankind.

**IKEDA:** That's right. Practitioners of kosen-rufu today means the SGI organization and its members. To protect the SGI and SGI members is to protect humankind. Since SGI members are spreading the Mystic Law, which brings great benefit to all people, they are treasures of humanity. I am not saying this out of self-aggrandizement or arrogance. This is what the Lotus Sutra teaches.

How truly fortunate we are! The key is whether we can fully awaken to this noble mission. When we do so, our life undergoes a complete transformation.

## THE VOWING TO PROTECT PRACTITIONERS

[In “A Sage and an Unenlightened Man,” Nichiren Daishonin writes:]  
The ‘Dharani’ chapter in the eighth volume of the Lotus Sutra says, ‘If you can shield and guard those who accept and uphold the mere name of the Lotus Sutra, your merit will be immeasurable.’ In this passage, the Buddha is praising Mother of Demon Children (Jpn Kishimojin) and the ten demon daughters for their vow to protect the votaries of the Lotus Sutra, and saying that the blessings from their vow to protect those who embrace the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra are beyond even the Buddha wisdom, which completely comprehends the three existences, to fathom. While by rights nothing should be beyond the grasp of the Buddha wisdom, the Buddha says here that the blessings that accrue from accepting and embracing the daimoku of the Lotus Sutra are the one thing that wisdom cannot measure. (WND, 131)

If there are those who fail to heed our spells and trouble and disrupt the preachers of the Law, their heads will split into seven pieces like the branches of the arjaka tree. Their crime will be like that of one who kills father and mother, or one who presses out oil, or cheats others with measures and scales, or, like Devadatta, disrupts the Order of monks. Anyone who commits a crime against these teachers of the Law will bring on himself guilt such as this! (LS26, 310)

**SAITO:** In the “Dharani” chapter, five parties vow to protect the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra.

After Medicine King, a bodhisattva named Brave Donor says to the Buddha:

World-Honored One, I too will pronounce dharanis to shield and guard those who read, recite, accept, and uphold the Lotus Sutra. If a teacher of the Law acquires these dharanis, then although yakshas, rakshasas, putanas, krityas, kumbhandas or hungry spirits should spy out his shortcomings and try to take advantage of them, they will be unable to do so. (LS26, 308)

Next, the heavenly kings Vaishravana and Upholder of the Nation individually recite dharani to safeguard the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra.

**IKEDA:** So after the two bodhisattvas, two of the four heavenly kings also make vows.

**SUDA:** Yes. After that, the ten demon daughters (Jpn Jurasetsunyo) and the Mother of Demon Children and a whole host of demons pledge: “World-Honored One, we too wish to shield and guard those who read, recite, accept, and uphold the Lotus Sutra and spare them from decline or harm. If anyone should spy out the shortcomings of these teachers of the Law and try to take advantage of them, we will make it impossible for him to do so” (LS26, 310).

**IKEDA:** What spirit! Women are really strong!

**ENDO:** After intoning a *dharani*, they resolutely declare: “Though they climb upon our very heads, they will never trouble the teachers of the Law! . . . though it [the harassment] be only in a dream, it will never trouble them!” (LS26, 310). They continue:

If there are those who fail to heed our spells  
and trouble and disrupt the preachers of the Law,

their heads will split into seven pieces  
like the branches of the arjaka tree.  
Their crime will be like that of one who kills father and mother.  
(LS26, 310)

**IKEDA:** The passage “If there are those who trouble the preachers of the Law, their heads will split into seven pieces” is famous. It is paraphrased on the upper right-hand side of the Gohonzon as we face it.

**SAITO:** This is the doctrine of punishment.

**IKEDA:** That’s right. The important thing to understand about punishment is that it is not something someone else does to us; it is our effect when we act contrary to the Law. However, when we live based on the Law, we receive benefit. These go hand in hand.

In the upper left-hand corner of the Gohonzon are the words, “Those who make offerings will gain good fortune surpassing the ten honorable titles [of the Buddha].”

**SAITO:** Still, the force of the ten demon daughters is tremendous.

**SUDA:** In fact, their pledge goes on: “We will see that they [the teachers of the Law] gain peace and tranquility, freeing them from decline and harm and nulling the effect of all poison herbs” (LS26, 311).

Shakyamuni delights at their words and praises the demon girls, saying:

“Excellent, excellent! If you can shield and guard those who accept and uphold the mere name of the Lotus Sutra, your merit will be immeasurable. How much more so if you shield and guard those who accept and uphold it in its entirety. . . . you and your attendants should shield and guard the teachers of the Law such as these!” (LS26, 311)

The sutra further says that the sixty-eight thousand persons in the assembly listening to this exchange attain the “truth of birthlessness,” signifying a kind of enlightenment (LS26, 311).

This concludes the “Dharani” chapter.

**IKEDA:** The chapter exudes the passion to steadfastly protect those who carry out the practice for kosen-rufu.

According to one interpretation, Bodhisattva Medicine King’s function is to protect practitioners of the Law in terms of health. He safeguards them from illness. Of course, since Medicine King represents the bodhisattvas of the theoretical teaching, his vow can be taken to mean that all bodhisattvas of the theoretical teaching protect the Bodhisattvas of the Earth, or bodhisattvas of the essential teaching.

Also, Bodhisattva Brave Donor courageously and unbegrudgingly offers the treasure of Buddhism to all living beings. While this primarily indicates making offerings of the Law, it can also mean supporting practitioners from a material standpoint.

Again, Vaishravana and Upholder of the Nation represent the four heavenly kings who protect Buddhism. Since they are kings of the world of Heaven, they have great power. In today’s terms, they can be thought of as leaders of society. It is the duty of such leaders to protect all practitioners of kosen-rufu without exception.

**ENDO:** Indeed, many leaders today around the world are praising the SGI.

## CHANGE EVIL DEMONS INTO BENEVOLENT DEITIES

### From “The Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings”

“The name of the Lotus Sutra’ means the daimoku. The ‘person’ or ‘you’ in the passage refers to all practitioners of the Lotus Sutra among the living beings of the country of Japan.

We may also say that, while the word ‘person’ or ‘you’ may refer either to men or women, here it is intended as praise for women in particular, since the persons being addressed are the ten demon daughters, who are of course female.” (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 778)

**IKEDA:** The fact that the ten demon daughters pledge their protection indicates that practitioners of the True Law can change evil demons into benevolent deities.

**SUDA:** After all, Mother of Demon Children and her daughters are originally all evil demons.

**IKEDA:** In the “Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings,” Nichiren Daishonin says: “In the case of the teachings that pertain to transmigration, the pre-Lotus Sutra teachings, she is an evil demon. But in the case of the teachings that pertain to the extinction of earthly desires, the Lotus Sutra teachings, she acts as a benevolent demon” (GZ, 778). With regard to Mother of Demon Children, for example, the Daishonin teaches that the characters can be read in two different ways—from top to bottom and from bottom to top—as meaning either “evil demon” or “benevolent demon” (cf. GZ, 778).

**ENDO:** The first interpretation is based on the top-to-bottom reading of the characters of *ki shi mo*. The Daishonin says, “*Ki*, the demon, is the father.” This refers to the fact that Kishimojin is the wife of the evil demon Panchika. Panchika is said to carry a sack of jewels, and in Japan he came to be known as Daikokuten, who is revered as the god of rice and rice fields.

**SUDA:** As to the middle character, read from the top, the Daishonin says, “*Shi*, the children, are the ten demon daughters.” Mother of Demon Children is said to have ten thousand children, and according to the Daishonin, these include the ten demon daughters.

**ENDO:** Speaking of demons, isn’t it interesting that male demons tend to have horrible faces, while female demons tend to be quite beautiful!

**SAITO:** Images of the ten demon daughters produced in Japan show them as having plump faces. It seems that these were objects of devotion in ancient times.

**IKEDA:** Beautiful women who protect the votaries of the Lotus Sutra—today these are none other than the members of our women’s and young women’s divisions. But calling them demons will surely bring retribution!

**SAITO:** Indeed, their fierce resolve to protect the SGI puts men to shame!

**IKEDA:** Men need to work harder so that women don’t have to go to such lengths. It’s inexcusable for men to take the efforts of women for granted.

**ENDO:** Regarding the third character making up the name of Mother of Demon Children, the Daishonin says, “*Mo*, mother, is Hariti.” This is apparently her original name,

and it seems that she was first revered in the Gandhara region of India (which is today in northern Pakistan).

**SUDA:** In Buddhist texts, Mother of Demon Children is described as a demon who steals and eats people's children. When Shakyamuni witnesses this, he hides her youngest child from her. Seeing Mother of Demon Children's grief at the disappearance of her child, Shakyamuni reprimands her, saying: "If you are so sad at the loss of just one of your many children, you must be able to understand the enormous grief of the parents whose children you steal and devour!" This well-known episode causes her change of heart.

**IKEDA:** Mother of Demon Children, who dotes on her own children while not the least concerned about the children of others, symbolizes the negative side of the maternal instinct. By contrast, to take the love one feels for one's own children and extend it into a love of humanity is the spirit of the merciful mother Perceiver of the World's Sounds, of a bodhisattva.

The Daishonin explains that the name of the "evil demon" Mother of Demon Children can also be read in reverse: "The word *jin* or 'goddess' represents the ninth consciousness. The word *mo* or 'mother' represents the eighth consciousness, the level at which ignorance appears. The word *shi* or 'children' represents the seventh and sixth consciousnesses. The word *ki* or 'Demon' represents the first five consciousnesses, those of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch" (GZ, 778).

Simply put, the ninth consciousness is the world of Buddhahood. When the world of Buddhahood in the depths of our lives wells forth, the eighth (or *alaya*) consciousness changes, as does the seventh (*mano*), the sixth (which corresponds to "mind"), and the rest of the five consciousnesses. These are all purified and come to function positively.

Through the power of the Mystic Law, the Mother of Demon Children becomes a benevolent demon. When we fight resolutely for kosen-rufu, then even evil demons turn into benevolent forces. Our obstacles become our aids.

**SAITO:** So, thanks to Shakyamuni, Mother of Demon Children and her daughters became benevolent deities.

**IKEDA:** And those to whom these benevolent deities give their protection are primarily women. They protect those women who are exerting themselves for kosen-rufu.

This is why the Daishonin declares, "[While the word *person* or *you* may refer either to men or women], here it is intended as praise for women in particular, since the persons being addressed are the ten demon daughters, who are of course female" (GZ, 778).

**ENDO:** It occurs to me that among those whom the Daishonin encouraged with the words, "The ten demon daughters will protect you," the majority of them were women. These include Shijo Kingo's daughter Kyo'o, Oto Gozen, Lady Nichinyo and the wife of Myomitsu Shonin.

**IKEDA:** I like to see women protected. I am always praying, indeed imploring, all the Buddhas and heavenly deities throughout time and space to: "Guard and protect wholeheartedly the SGI women's and young women's division members. Keep them safe from harm and in good health, and fill their lives with good fortune and boundless happiness." I pray with the fervor of a roaring lion. I hope all leaders will have that same spirit.

## BUDDHISM IS A GREAT STRUGGLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL

**IKEDA:** In the “Dharani” chapter, two sages (the bodhisattvas Medicine King and Brave Donor), two deities (Vaishravana and Upholder of the Nation) and various demons all pledge their protection. They are representatives of the Buddhist gods and bodhisattvas throughout the universe who all make the same pledge. They could be described as the alliance to protect the votaries of the Lotus Sutra.

Why is this? Why is their protection necessary? It’s because kosen-rufu is a great struggle between the Buddha and all manner of negative forces. This *saha* world is the domain of the devil king of the sixth heaven. The “revolutionaries” who stand up and challenge this “evil sovereign” in the name of justice are Buddhas; they are the votaries of the Lotus Sutra. It is only natural that they will be attacked by the forces of evil. If this evil were allowed to persist, however, the world would remain shrouded in darkness. But the “Dharani” chapter states that the sutra’s practitioners will be protected from this army of evil by an army of good.

The Daishonin says: “You people look to human beings to be your allies. But I, Nichiren, make the gods of the sun and moon, Shakra and Brahma, my allies” (WND, 1057). He says in effect: “You make allies of people. I will make an ally of the heavens.” On a different level, I, too, have tried to live with the universe as my ally.

The Daishonin also says: “[Despite the personal interference of the devil king of the sixth heaven] it is because the heavenly deities came to my aid that I survived even at Tatsunokuchi, and also emerged safely from other great persecutions. By now, the devil king must be discouraged” (GZ, 843).

**SAITO:** What a remarkable state of life to be able to say, “The devil king must now be discouraged.” Certainly it is true that, even with the full power of the Japanese state behind them, the Daishonin’s enemies could not do away with him. This is incredible! It’s inconceivable! Standing entirely alone, the Daishonin resolutely fought on with universal forces on his side.

**IKEDA:** In his later years, President Toda remarked: “The Soka Gakkai has managed to come to this point. This would have been unimaginable without the protection of the Buddhist gods.” Only people who have put their all into the struggle for kosen-rufu can understand these words.

The Osaka Incident,<sup>4</sup> to take one example, was a ploy to crush the Soka Gakkai. Because of the organization’s rapid growth, plans were made to suppress it. The principal targets were President Toda and myself. The authorities obviously intended to use my arrest as an excuse to investigate the Soka Gakkai and eventually haul in President Toda. Mr. Toda was getting on in years and I knew better than anyone how physically weak he was. Had he been put in jail, it could well have meant his life.

In response to their tactics, President Toda demanded: “Release Daisaku! I will come get him myself, club in hand, if I must.” And he said, “I’m ready to spend fifteen more years in prison.”

I absolutely had to prevent them from getting at President Toda and from trampling on the citadel of kosen-rufu. I prayed that I would bear the brunt of the attack and go to prison instead. I prayed to be a shield protecting President Toda. And so it was that I ended up going to jail.

**SAITO:** You went in his place.

**IKEDA:** It has been my determination to become the roof of the Soka Gakkai. A roof has to withstand scorching heat, rain, storms and heavy snowfall. But if that's what it takes to be a true bulwark for others, then it's worth it. Nothing would be more lamentable, however, than if leaders were to grow spoiled and decadent due to such protection.

I am like a stake in the water. As long as the stake is firmly in place, the ship of the people tied to the stake can remain stalwart. Then, even on stormy days, everyone can rest assured. Meanwhile, as everyone enjoys their security, the stake, out of sight in the cold water, stands firmly to keep the ship in place.

**SAITO:** My understanding of the "Dharani" chapter has until now been rather vague. The vow of the ten demon daughters, "Though they climb upon our very heads, they will never trouble the teachers of the Law!" (LS26, 310), is also a pledge to bear the brunt of attacks and protect the practitioners of the Lotus Sutra, even if it means being attacked themselves.

I had interpreted this as simply the pledge of the Buddhist gods. But I now understand that it is an exhortation to me personally to embrace the same determination.

**SUDA:** To protect the person is to protect the Law.

**IKEDA:** As the Daishonin says, "The Law does not spread by itself" (GZ, 856). Without people, Buddhism would perish.

**ENDO:** That reminds me of the Daishonin's words of praise to Joken-bo and Gijo-bo [who had been his seniors when he initially became a priest] for protecting him at a time of crisis. He says, "You have performed an unrivaled service for the Lotus Sutra" (WND, 729).

## PEOPLE FUNCTION AS BUDDHIST GODS

**IKEDA:** That's right. "You have performed an unrivaled service for the Lotus Sutra"—in other words, there is no greater offering to the Lotus Sutra than to protect its votary.

Gijo-bo and Joken-bo had not gathered together high-ranking priests and held a grand ceremony. Nor had they delivered fine lectures before many people or made contributions to Mount Hiei, which could be thought of as the head temple of the Lotus Sutra for that time. But when the Daishonin first proclaimed his teaching, these two priests protected him from attack at the hands of the local authority (the steward Tojo Kagenobu) and secretly helped him escape capture. It was this act that the Daishonin praised as "an unrivaled service for the Lotus Sutra" and what led him to declare that they were sure to attain Buddhahood.

He makes this statement in "On Repaying Debts of Gratitude" more than twenty years after the incident occurred. Even so long after the fact, the Daishonin never forgot his gratitude and continued to warmly encourage them.

The Daishonin was always appreciative and full of praise for those who had protected him, saying things like, "You must be the incarnation of Bodhisattva Pure Practices"; and "Shakyamuni lord of the teachings must have entered your body prompting you to come to my assistance." He never expected nor took for granted the efforts of others on his behalf. Self-centered people tend to be arrogant, thinking it only natural that others support and protect them. But those who live centered on the Law will be filled with gratitude for such consideration, regarding it as an act for the sake of the Law.

The world of kosen-rufu is bound together by feelings of mutual respect and appreciation. I don't know how many times in a single day I say the words "thank you." It must be tens or even hundreds of times.

**SAITO:** I think that people who have lost such a beautiful spirit eventually find it impossible to stay with the SGI.

**SUDA:** But they don't want to recognize that they have fallen from this pure world of faith. So to justify themselves, they blame the SGI. This is most likely what goes on in the minds of those who abandon their faith and turn against the SGI.

**ENDO:** When we read such words of the Daishonin, however, we can clearly see that while he speaks of Buddhist gods, which may conjure images of some mysterious invisible force, these actually take the form of real people.

**SUDA:** Buddhist gods also represent natural phenomena, such as the power of wind.

**ENDO:** That is also true, but I think it is above all the people in our immediate surroundings who function as Buddhist gods.

### **WORKING TOGETHER FOR KOSEN-RUFU IS MOST RESPECTWORTHY**

**IKEDA:** Exactly. In particular, our fellow members of the SGI are themselves Buddhist gods, something that should be treasured and appreciated to the utmost.

This is what the Daishonin tells his followers. For example, he says: "The heavenly gods and benevolent deities will assume various forms such as those of men and women, and present offerings to help the persons who practice the Lotus Sutra" (WND, 35); and "It must be that the ten demon daughters have entered into your body to come to my aid" (GZ, 1414).

[The Daishonin wrote this to a follower who had brought offerings for him all the way to remote Mount Minobu at a time when his priestly disciples of many years had ceased to visit him.]

There are many such examples. Today, those who support kosen-rufu and the SGI, the organization of kosen-rufu, can all be thought of as Buddhist gods. They are bodhisattvas and the Buddha's emissaries. To forget this and instead admire only influential people in society, while thinking little of one's fellow members, is completely backward. Our fellow members are most precious and honorable. What is societal status? What is wealth? In light of the Lotus Sutra, no one is more respectable than SGI members who are working for kosen-rufu. I have said this many times. I would like this to be taken as my final injunction.

Kosen-rufu will advance to the extent that we sincerely treasure and support our fellow SGI members. Should the bonfire of this passionate spirit be extinguished, it would lead to bureaucratism, and the flame of kosen-rufu would die out.

**SUDA:** I imagine there are some arrogant and cunning individuals within the SGI as well.

**IKEDA:** For precisely this reason, I would like to see members establish a firm solidarity as true comrades and protect the SGI. For this is the organization that President Toda declared more precious to him than his own life.

At any rate, those who treasure the Gohonzon will in turn be treasured by the Gohonzon, as well as by all Buddhas and Buddhist gods throughout the three existences

and the ten directions, just as a mirror reflects our image. When we protect those who are struggling for the widespread propagation of the Mystic Law, we in turn will be protected by the Gohonzon. This is indicated in the “Dharani” chapter when Shakyamuni praises the two sages, two deities and the benevolent demons saying, “Excellent, excellent!” (LS26, 311).

Those who treasure the SGI will be treasured by the Gohonzon. As long as we remember this one point, our lives will be rock-solid.

## THE ONENESS OF MENTOR AND DISCIPLE

**SUDA:** I understand that Mr. Toda also worked with great determination to protect first Soka Gakkai president Tsunesaburo Makiguchi. He gave himself entirely to the publication of Mr. Makiguchi’s *Soka Kyoikugaku Taikei* (System of Value-creating Education), from getting the manuscript into order to printing it.

**IKEDA:** Yes. That’s why President Toda is listed in the book as both publisher and printer.

The name *soka* was born from a discussion that took place between President Makiguchi and Mr. Toda. As is well known, it was Mr. Toda who came up with it.

**SUDA:** Yes. It seems this happened around 1929 when Mr. Makiguchi and Mr. Toda were talking one night until after midnight at Mr. Toda’s house, seated around the brazier.

President Makiguchi said to Mr. Toda: “Never before has there been even one elementary school principal who has published a theory of education. There is a chance that I will be forced to resign my post as principal of the Shirogane Elementary School [in Tokyo]. And while this is not a problem for me personally, I want to prepare my theory of education for those to come while I am still active as school headmaster.”

Mr. Toda replied, “Sensei, let’s go ahead with it!”

“It will take money, Toda.”

“I don’t have very much, but I will gladly put in all I have—19,000 yen.” Mr. Toda then asked President Makiguchi, “What is the purpose of your theory on education?”

“It is to create value.”

“Then let’s call it *soka* [value-creating] education.”

The name was thus decided.<sup>5</sup>

**IKEDA:** This is also the *soka* of Soka Gakkai. In today’s confused world, this is a name that brings hope to humankind. The creation of value—of beauty, benefit and good—this is a name filled with profound philosophy and character. It also reflects the character of these two great predecessors.

The name had been decided, but from that point on, the journey was long. Just scraping together the necessary capital to finance the project was a great struggle.

**SUDA:** President Toda came up with the idea of holding practice examinations for students in Tokyo. This was around the time that the term “entrance examination hell” came into use, referring to the grueling process of gaining admission to high school. It seems that the process was made even more rigorous by the fact that examinees had no way of gauging their ability or the degree of difficulty of the exams in advance. By returning corrected answers on the practice tests, Mr. Toda gave students a way to determine to which schools they should apply based on their ability.

The first time, he administered the test for a group of about five hundred in a single hall. Several years later, he had approximately three thousand students taking the test at five sites. Through these efforts, Mr. Toda came up with the funds to finance the publication of President Makiguchi's *Soka Kyoikugaku Taikei*.

**IKEDA:** Mr. Toda later wrote a mathematics textbook titled *Suirishiki Shido Sanjutsu* (A Deductive Guide to Arithmetic), which became a bestseller. Again, he used the royalties to help President Makiguchi.

They decided on the book's title and managed to pull together the necessary funds to publish it, but a lot more was required to see it through to completion. That's because Mr. Makiguchi's busy schedule didn't allow him the time he needed to get the manuscript in order. He was always jotting down his thoughts on memo pads or scraps of paper. While these notes contained the crystallization of his profound thought, he simply hadn't the time to organize them. So Mr. Toda offered to do it for him.

President Makiguchi hesitated, not wanting to burden Mr. Toda with such a task. It would be quite an undertaking, as his notes were in utter disarray. He probably also doubted whether it would even be possible for another person to make sense of them.

But Mr. Toda insisted: "If I can't even understand your theory, then who is the book going to be published for? Do you want leading scholars around the world to read it? If I read your notes and can understand them, then I am confident I will be able to compile them."<sup>6</sup>

When he came upon overlapping information, Mr. Toda would cut the memos apart, regrouping them by topic. He reportedly had an eight-tatami-mat room filled with such clippings, which he arranged in logical order and which became the basis for Mr. Makiguchi's book.

President Makiguchi's theory was extremely complex, and Mr. Toda's diligence completing the project was a monumental endeavor. President Toda organized the first three volumes in this fashion, eventually publishing all four volumes himself.

**SAITO:** From its inception, the *Soka Kyoikugaku Taikei* was the crystallization of the principle of the oneness of mentor and disciple. This is truly moving.

**IKEDA:** Whenever Mr. Toda, who tended to be lighthearted and candid, spoke about Mr. Makiguchi, he always became very serious. And he continued to talk about President Makiguchi to the very end of his life.

His life overflowed with the solemn determination to protect his mentor. This is itself the spirit of performing "an unrivaled service for the Lotus Sutra" (WND, 729).

### THE MEANING OF "DHARANI"

**IKEDA:** I think it's time we clarified the meaning of dharani. This term is probably unfamiliar to many.

**ENDO:** Earlier we looked at the *dharani* spell that Bodhisattva Medicine King intones. It begins, "*anye manye mane mamane*" and so forth. These are the first four words; altogether it is forty-three words long.

**SUDA:** It sounds like a spell.

**ENDO:** It *is* a spell.

**SAITO:** And it has a literal meaning.

**ENDO:** That's right. Referring to the original Sanskrit text and the Chinese translation appearing in the Dharmaraksha's *Sho-hokke-kyo*,<sup>7</sup> it basically goes like this:

The state of tranquil extinction and emancipation which is the Buddha's enlightened state eradicates the sufferings of all people equally. With his gaze fixed on his inner aspect that is pure, unchanging and inherent in all, he abides in peace and tranquillity. He causes people to believe and accept this, and so enables them to experience peace and tranquility. With skilled words that are inexhaustible, he develops boundless happiness and greatly advances without looking back.

This is the gist of it. It seems that quite a bit of research is being done on this passage.

**SAITO:** These words are often simply discounted as spells or incantations.

**IKEDA:** There must be some meaning in the fact that Kumarajiva did not translate this passage into Chinese.

**SUDA:** He simply transliterated the Sanskrit sounds into Chinese characters.

**IKEDA:** The word *dharani* is itself a Sanskrit term.

**SAITO:** Yes, and in Chinese the term is translated using characters that mean "upholding." It includes the idea of being "capable of upholding" as well as "able to ward off." According to the explanation of the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai of China (in *Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra*), by firmly upholding the words of the Buddha, one can "thwart evil and give rise to good."

Originally, *dharani* meant to "remember and preserve," its roots meaning to "support" or "maintain."

**IKEDA:** Hence, it means "upholding"—to uphold and maintain all the teachings. In the *Sho-hokke-kyo*, the chapter is titled not "Dharani" but "Upholding."

**ENDO:** Yes. It means to maintain the teaching in its entirety in one's heart.

The term *dharani* in fact appears in the Lotus Sutra about ten times in the preceding chapters. The "Introduction" (first) chapter says of the bodhisattvas gathered at the assembly, "All had gained *dharanis*, delighted in preaching, were eloquent, and turned the wheel of the Law that knows no regression" (LS1, 4). *Dharani*, here, means to remember and uphold the Buddha's preaching.

**IKEDA:** In ancient civilizations, important teachings were not recorded. It was customary instead to commit them to memory, carrying them always in one's heart. To deeply engrave the mentor's teaching in one's life for eternity—this is the original meaning of *dharani*. In short, it is to "remember and bear firmly in mind." It is to absolutely never forget the words of the mentor.

[The expression "remember and bear firmly in mind" appears in the Universal Worthy Sutra. In his writings, the Daishonin says, "Many hear about and accept this sutra, but when great obstacles arise, just as they were told would happen, few remember it and bear it firmly in mind" (WND, 471).

This is the "dharani of retaining all that one hears" (cf. LS17, 233). There is also a "dharani of retaining repetitions of teachings" (cf. LS17, 234).

**SUDA:** This means "repeatedly intoning." The "Distinctions in Benefits" (seventeenth)

chapter speaks of *dharani* to retain repetitions of teachings, saying that numerous bodhisattvas “gained *dharani* that allow them to retain hundreds, thousands, ten thousands, millions, immeasurable repetitions of the teachings” (LS17, 234).

**ENDO:** To chant daimoku that many times would bring incredible results!

### **DHARANI ARE THE BUDDHA’S SECRET WORDS**

**IKEDA:** The Daishonin flatly states in the “Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings,” “*Dharani* here means Nam-myoho-renge-kyo” (GZ, 777). He continues, “Therefore, *dharani* represent the secret words of all Buddhas.” He is saying that it is a secret language that only Buddhas understand.

The Daishonin further says: “The five characters of the daimoku are the secret words of the secret of all Buddhas over the three existences of past, present and future.” In other words, they are the secrets of all secrets.

Among secrets, some hide faults or evil deeds, and some veil hidden treasure. We are of course talking about the latter kind of secret. Simply put, *dharani* may be described as an example of words imbued with spirit. They do not simply convey a meaning; they are infused with the energy of life. Therefore sound and rhythm are very important.

**ENDO:** It seems like *dharani* are similar to poetry.

**IKEDA:** In a broad sense, poetry and *dharani* are alike. As a matter of fact, in ancient times in Japan, *waka* poetry was considered the *dharani* of Japan, and the art of poetry was considered the most direct way to enlightenment. This was the belief of such figures as Saigyō.<sup>8</sup>

The sound and rhythm of words infused with the energy of life were considered to be a kind of power.

**SUDA:** It has traditionally been thought in Japan that words themselves when spoken have a mysterious power to bring about what they describe.

**SAITO:** Throughout the ancient world, it was often believed that words that express truth possessed the power to dispel misfortune or cure illness.

**ENDO:** It may be that such beliefs are what the “Dharani” chapter was based on. After all, the purpose of presenting the votaries of the Lotus Sutra with *dharani* spells is to afford them protection.

**IKEDA:** That’s true. Still, we mustn’t just accept at face value the concept that words have mysterious power; Shakyamuni himself prohibited the casting of spells and fortunetelling. That said, however, the sound and rhythm of words do have greater power than the meaning of words themselves. Words indeed have life.

The Japanese author Toson Shimazaki (1872–1943) said: “Life is power. Power is voice. The voice is words. New words are therefore new life.”<sup>9</sup>

The voice more than anything expresses our life force. That is why the heart, the body and life itself can be transformed depending on our voice and choice of words.

As the Daishonin says, “The voice does the Buddha’s work” (GZ, 708). The voice also has the ability to produce evil. Positive words create a healthy mind and body while negative words adversely affect our mental and physical well-being.

**ENDO:** So *dharani* are words of truth infused with the greatest vitality.

**IKEDA:** In the world of art, there is an enormous difference between an original and a forgery. The original is filled with an indescribable force, a power that grabs people's hearts. That's because it has been infused with the artist's life itself. A forgery, on the other hand, no matter how close to the original, is infused with only the desire to make money. This cannot help but be expressed in the work. It is the same with words. Words that are filled with life, that have life flowing through them, are like great art.

**SAITO:** That must be why Kumarajiva did not translate the *dharani*.

**IKEDA:** We also do not translate *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*, for this is the language of the Buddha.

If you go to an English-speaking country and you say "Thank you," you will be understood even if you don't understand the precise meaning of the words. Likewise, since *daimoku* is the language of the Buddha, when we chant *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo* our prayers are communicated to all Buddhas throughout time and space.

The Daishonin says, "The voice of chanting *daimoku* cannot fail to reach all the worlds in the ten directions" (GZ, 808). The voice is what matters.

To illustrate, the sounds *ka ki ku ke ko*, of the fifty sounds in the Japanese phonetic system, are hard on the ear. There is a very solid feeling about them. But the sounds *sa shi su se so* are soft and airy, like the wind. *Na ni nu ne no* feels smooth, whereas *ma mi mu me mo* feels damp and moist.

**SAITO:** Come to think of it, the great violinist Sir Yehudi Menuhin remarked in his dialogue with you, President Ikeda, that the sound of *daimoku* is easy to hum and has a pleasant rhythm.

**IKEDA:** And this was coming from one of the most particular persons in the world when it comes to the nuances of sound!

**SUDA:** He also said that he received an especially strong impression from the syllable *nam* in *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*.

And he described the sound of the letter "m" as the wellspring of life. Observing that it is present in the word *mother*, and in *mama*, he said it is often the first sound that children learn to make. It is therefore a very important sound, he stated, adding that it was also deeply significant that the sound of "r" (in *ren*) occupies a central position.

**IKEDA:** Mr. Menuhin said he thought there were profound similarities between chanting *Nam-myoho-renge-kyo* and singing. And he pointed out that the act of using one's voice has a positive influence on the human body.

**SAITO:** I understand that Rector Roberto Kertész of Flores University in Argentina expressed interest in finding scientific evidence of the effects of chanting *daimoku*.

[He made this comment while visiting Japan in January 1999 to present Mr. Ikeda with an honorary doctorate and Mrs. Ikeda with an honorary professorship.]

He explained that his interest had been piqued from seeing all the benefit that SGI members are receiving and that he wished to help people who either know nothing about Buddhism or have no interest in it understand its greatness and the greatness of *daimoku*.

**ENDO:** This is truly an incredible time!

**SUDA:** So, to recapitulate, there are three kinds of *dharani*: the power to remember and bear firmly in mind (the “*dharani* of listening and upholding”), the repetition of a teaching engraved in one’s life for the benefit of oneself and others (the “*dharani* of retaining repetitions of teachings”), and short phrases to protect those who correctly uphold the Buddha’s teaching (the *dharani* spell). There are of course other *dharani*, too.

**ENDO:** The “Dharani” chapter primarily concerns the third of these. The source and underlying power of these spells is of course the Mystic Law.

## THE UNIVERSE SINGS A SONG OF SUPPORT

**IKEDA:** The Mystic Law is the fundamental rhythm of the universe. The entire universe is a grand orchestra, a choir.

The great French writer Victor Hugo (1802–85) sings:

You must know that everything has its law, its goal, its road;  
That from the star to the atom, immensity listens to itself;  
That everything has a consciousness inside the creation;



Everything speaks;  
The air which passes, the seabird which sails;  
Each blade of grass, flower, germ and element.  
Did you imagine the universe differently?



Everything in the universe says something to someone;  
One thought fills with superb tumult.  
God didn’t make any sound without mixing a verb in it;  
Everything speaks.  
And now, man, do you know why everything speaks?  
Listen.  
It is because wind, waves, flames, trees, reeds, rocks—  
Everything is alive.<sup>10</sup>

The poet’s intuition is in fact being substantiated by modern science.

I have discussed this in the past, so I won’t go into great detail here, but the point is that people’s view of the universe is shifting. Whereas the universe was once thought of as a mere collection of silent matter, it is coming to be seen as dynamic—a place where, as Hugo describes, the “harp of the heavens” rings out and all things produce sound.

Everything from the microscopic world of elementary particles, atoms and molecules to the macrocosmic world of planets, the solar system and the galaxy—to say nothing of the world of living organisms—is oscillating and emitting sounds in accord with the principles of musical harmony.<sup>11</sup>

**SAITO:** The Daishonin says:

In the last analysis, since this is the mantra [true words] of the *dharani* of the Mystic Law, the words and sounds of all beings in the Ten Dharma Worlds from Buddhahood to Hell are all *dharani* [to protect the votaries of the Lotus Sutra]. . . .

*Dharani* are part of the function of Nam-myoho-renge-kyo. (GZ, 802)

**IKEDA:** All things produce sound. And all of these sounds, from the world of Hell to the world of Buddhahood, are songs of support for the votaries of the Lotus Sutra. They are the pledge of the vast universe to protect the sutra's votaries without fail.

**SUDA:** An inspiring thought!

**ENDO:** The Daishonin speaks of the "mantra of the *dharani* of the Mystic Law." There is also a *dharani* known as the "mantra *dharani*" (spells used by the True Words [Shingon] school of Buddhism). Mantra and *dharani*, which had different origins, seem to have grown closer in meaning.

**IKEDA:** One thing that distinguished them originally was that mantra referred to "short spells" and *dharani* to "long spells."

**SAITO:** "Mantra" means the true words of the Buddha. This ultimately means Nam-myoho-renge-kyo.

The Daishonin says that the five *dharani* pronounced by the two bodhisattvas, the two heavenly kings and the ten demon daughters in the "Dharani" chapter in fact correspond to the "five characters of the Mystic Law"; and that "the five *dharani* are our own life" (GZ, 778).

### **THE BUDDHIST GODS RESPOND TO SELF-RELIANT FAITH**

**IKEDA:** The macrocosm of the universe is an expression of the five characters of the Mystic Law, as is the microcosm of our lives and the protection *dharani* described in the "Dharani" chapter. This means that we, as votaries of the Mystic Law, will receive the universe's protection depending on how vibrant our lives are. The universe protects those whose life burns with faith. The Great Teacher Miao-lo of China states: "The stronger one's faith, the greater the protection of the gods."<sup>12</sup> This is a passage that the Daishonin cites repeatedly.

If a people who have faith in the Mystic Law become great leaders, then the Buddhist gods who are their supporters will work wholeheartedly on their behalf. If, on the other hand, they have weak faith, their supporters will not lift a finger. The Daishonin says: "A sword is useless in the hands of a coward" (WND, 412). The Buddhist gods will work hardest to protect those striving most diligently for kosen-rufu.

**ENDO:** We shouldn't be dependent on the Buddhist gods for protection, but should work ourselves to spur them to action.

**IKEDA:** Otherwise, we will grow weak and spineless. And then what would be the point of faith?

Strong faith means self-reliant faith. The Daishonin says: "Let the gods forsake me. Let all persecutions assail me. Still I will give my life for the sake of the Law" (WND, 280). The solemn protection of the Buddhist gods is acquired through such unflagging faith.

If we have the kind of faith where we can say: "If I can work for kosen-rufu, I don't need anything else," everything will open up for us. Buddhism is a battle. Without victory, everything is meaningless.

### **DEDICATION TO KOSEN-RUFU BRINGS FORTH INCREDIBLE LIFE FORCE**

**IKEDA:** At any rate, there is a fundamental difference in someone who strives to protect

the SGI for the sake of kosen-rufu and someone who tries to use it for personal gain. It's incredible just how much energy, wisdom and compassion well forth from our lives and how much the Buddhist gods go to work for us when we truly stand up for kosen-rufu.

Exactly three years after I took faith, President Toda's business failed.<sup>13</sup> While he was not accused of any criminal wrong-doing, he wound up with debts of several tens of millions of yen. This would be equivalent to tens of millions of U.S. dollars today. But I worked and worked, and I repaid it all.

There wasn't even enough money to buy Mr. Toda a bottle of *sake*, so I pawned my overcoat to get him some. For six months I received no salary. My shoes were falling apart, I didn't have any proper clothes, and I was in poor health. But if it meant I could protect President Toda, I was even willing to suffer in the worlds of Hunger and Hell. I was determined to have no regrets. I knew that to protect President Toda was to protect kosen-rufu.

Among the more senior employees, who were also leaders in the Soka Gakkai, there were some who deserted Mr. Toda when he was in the direst of straits. At the crucial moment it becomes clear who are living true to the spirit of mentor and disciple and who are interested only in protecting themselves. Arrogant people above all view the mentor from the perspective of their own needs. They are like someone gazing at the summit of a high mountain from below, unable to grasp what it is like at the top. Yet they pretend to understand it perfectly well.

The Daishonin says: "Among my disciples, those who think themselves well versed in Buddhism are the ones who make errors" (WND, 903). The kind of arrogance that feigns a complete understanding of Buddhism is most dangerous. When times get difficult, people with such arrogance will do what they can to stay out of harm's way and, acting as though they were mere observers, try to make themselves look good. They will manipulate things for their own protection. Because they never experience true hardship, they are completely unaware of the debt of gratitude they owe their mentor and the SGI.

When we practice humbly with the attitude that we will give our lives for the sake of kosen-rufu, incredible power wells forth from the depths of our life. In every activity where I took responsibility, I produced results that were unmatched in the entire country. I have spread the Mystic Law around the world. I have made the impossible possible. There is therefore no way that my successors should be unable to manifest genuine strength!

There were many leaders who had been practicing longer than me, who were many years my senior. I was also not a top leader. But it's not a matter of position. It's not about appearances. Position in the organization and faith are entirely separate issues. Position does not make one worthy; strong faith is all that matters. This is why I have said that I want the members of the youth division to possess the awareness that they are each the president of the SGI.

The important thing is to stand alone and chant daimoku with the pledge, "I will accomplish kosen-rufu without fail." We need to pray to the Gohonzon, "Please allow me to fight with the intensity of a charging demon." With such prayer, we cannot fail to manifest power. We cannot fail to win.

No matter how difficult the circumstances, one who stands up in earnest for kosen-rufu will absolutely receive the protection of the Buddhist gods. It is the "Dharani" chapter that teaches such passionate confidence in faith.

*To be continued*

1. Suiko-kai: A young men's division special training group that studied directly under second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda. They took their name from the Chinese novel *Suikoden* (The Water Margin).
2. Editor's Note: All quotations from Nichiren Daishonin are from the recently published translation *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* (abbreviated as WND) (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), unless otherwise stated.
3. Editor's note: All quotations from the Lotus Sutra are from: *The Lotus Sutra*, trans. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). For purposes of convenience, all citations from this work will be given in the text and abbreviated as follows: LS followed by the chapter number, and the page number.
4. Osaka Incident: On July 3, 1957, Daisaku Ikeda was arrested and imprisoned by the Osaka Prefectural Police on trumped-up charges of violating the election law. He was later cleared of any wrongdoing.
5. *Toda Josei Zenshu* (Collected Writings of Josei Toda) (Tokyo: Seikyo Shimbunsha, 1983), vol. 3, p. 417.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 418.
7. Sho-hokke-kyo: The earliest Chinese translation of the Saddharamapundarika-sutra (Lotus Sutra), consisting of twenty-seven chapters in ten volumes. This translation (dated A.D. 286) corresponds with the Myoho-renge-kyo (A.D. 406) of Kumarajiva in most respects, except that it contains several parables which the latter omits.
8. Saigyō (1118–90): Waka poet and Buddhist priest of the Shingon School.
9. *Toson Shimazaki*, Toson Shisho (Personally Selected Poems by Toson Shimazaki) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1972), p. 4.
10. Translated from the French. Victor Hugo, "Ce que dit la bouche d'ombre" (What says the shadow's mouth), *Les contemplations* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995), pp. 361–63.
11. President Ikeda spoke about this at the first SGI World Youth Division Leaders Meeting, held in Tokyo on July 10, 1991.
12. The eighth volume of *Maka Shikan Bugyoden Guketsu* (Annotations on "Great Concentration and Insights").
13. Mr. Ikeda joined the Soka Gakkai on August 24, 1947 and became Mr. Toda's employee in 1948. On August 22, 1950, Mr. Toda was forced to shut down operations of his business.