

DIALOGUE ON THE LOTUS SUTRA (51) THE VICTORY OF A “FAMILY REVOLUTION”

This is the fifty-first 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 April 1999 issue of the *Daibyakurenge*, the Soka Gakkai study journal.

Creating a harmonious family through faith is one of the eternal guidelines of the SGI. The “Former Affairs of King Wonderful Adornment” (twenty-seventh) chapter of the Lotus Sutra describes how a king is led to the Law through the efforts of his wife and two children. This chapter outlines the principles for a “family revolution.” Through its description of a wife and children causing a powerful husband to change his authoritarian ways, the chapter is also a guideline for realizing *kosen-rufu* in any country. In this installment, the participants discuss the importance of treating non-practicing family members with compassion. They also look at relations between couples and between parents and children, and how to share faith in the Mystic Law with one’s children.

DAISAKU IKEDA: Just this past February [1999], a number of SGI representatives from Asia visited Okinawa. Regarding one couple who were there, I commented: “Their daughter is now a senior in high school. In the future, when she falls in love and marries, her father will be the one who misses her the most. Mothers know that one day their daughters will get married, and so take it in stride. Because fathers always cherish their daughters above all, they lie awake at night in tears!

“The Lotus Sutra explains the enlightenment of the dragon king’s daughter. Her name is written [in Chinese] with two characters; the first (dragon) corresponds to *father*, and the second (woman) corresponds to *daughter*. The father-daughter relationship is extremely profound.

“Therefore, even after a daughter falls in love and gets married, nothing makes a father happier than for his daughter to tell him that she loves him best of all. There is no sentiment more appreciated by a father. A family where the daughter cherishes her father is a happy one.”

KATSUJI SAITO: This may seem simple, but I think it is a fundamental principle of humanity.

IKEDA: Nichiren Daishonin’s wisdom is that: “Women support others and thereby cause others to support them” (WND, 501)].¹ This is Buddhist psychology; it reveals insight into humanity. While this guidance was directed at women, taking into consideration the social conditions of the day, it is wisdom that applies to both women and men, as well as to couples and to parents and children.

TAKANORI ENDO: The same would apply towards a father who does not practice.

IKEDA: Yes, it is the same principle—we should treat a father who does not practice with great care and sincerity, always asking after his health and encouraging him to live long. Becoming a good child, a good spouse—that is proof of our faith. If we instead let our

families down because of our Buddhist practice, then what is the point of faith?

It is foolish to quarrel over matters of faith. Besides, often when family members are opposed to a person's faith, it is not so much because they have a problem with the practice itself but more with the behavior of the person. It is not uncommon for people to attribute their spousal problems to issues of faith.

Of course, such problems are fundamentally due to our own karma. And sometimes they are the workings of the three obstacles and four devils [types of problems that test one's faith in Buddhism]. That is why the Daishonin says to the wives of the Ikegami brothers, "You two wives should have no regrets even if your husbands do you harm because of your faith in this teaching" (WND, 502). He also states, "Whether tempted by good or threatened by evil, if one casts aside the Lotus Sutra, one destines oneself for hell" (WND, 280). The important thing is to maintain faith under any circumstances. This is the foundation of happiness.

We need to strengthen our faith. This is the basis for everything. Then we can lead our entire family to happiness. Steadfast faith does not mean projecting a heroic image. It means showing genuine concern and consideration for others' circumstances. Even the smallest act of consideration shines with a brilliant light.

"TREASURE YOUR WIFE AND CHILDREN"

IKEDA: Second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda was frequently asked about family members who opposed the practice.

To someone whose children were against their Buddhist practice, he said, "You need to show how much you love your children. . . . If parents treasure their children, there is no way the children will turn against them. Nothing can match a parent's compassion. It's because your children aren't getting enough affection that your family is in discord. It's not the children's fault, it's you, the parent's fault. If you try to blame your misfortune on the Gohonzon, you will only make matters worse."²

To someone whose wife opposed his faith, President Toda said: "You must fulfill your responsibilities as a husband. A husband should adore his wife and be able to buy her a new dress on occasion.

"You need to resolve this problem yourself. Your wife is not the problem. You are. First, you must change. You must become an admirable human being. You are allowing yourself to be held back by your wife's opposition. It's up to you to develop an expansive state of life. . . . As long as you are complaining to your wife, you are not practicing correctly. When you can show your wife the appreciation you would show the Buddha, she will have nothing to object to.

"There is usually no reason for a husband to complain about his wife. After all she's not receiving a paycheck from you! And I bet you don't even buy her new clothes! So, rather than grumbling all the time, you should cherish her dearly. That is where faith begins. I can't stand to hear men complain about their wives not practicing or blame their wives for their problems when they themselves aren't doing much of anything."³

This was usually the kind of guidance President Toda gave to people in such situations.

ENDO: It's very clear, isn't it?

HARUO SUDA: The guidance of the Soka Gakkai remains consistent.

SAITO: It seems as if we've already reached our conclusion before even beginning our

discussion of the “Former Affairs of King Wonderful Adornment”(twenty-seventh) chapter!

IKEDA: No. We still need to provide ample evidence for our conclusions based on the sutra. Let’s thoroughly clarify how to develop the kind of excellent faith that can create a harmonious family. This chapter contains a number of important points.

ENDO: In the title, “Former Affairs of King Wonderful Adornment,” *former affairs* indicates origins or history. So this chapter describes the kind of person King Wonderful Adornment was, as well as some of his experiences and episodes.

IKEDA: Yes, it’s a well-known story.

SUDA: The king was the only one in his family who did not practice Buddhism. It is a tale of how the wife and two children enabled the king to take faith.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN CUSTOM AND PROGRESS

ENDO: A long, long time ago there was a king named Wonderful Adornment. The king’s wife was named Pure Virtue; and their two sons were Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye. As you can see, the names of the three all include the word *pure*.

The queen and two princes took faith in the teaching expounded by a Buddha named Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom. The king alone remained deeply attached to Brahmanism.

SAITO: We can surmise that Shakyumuni’s India, in which Brahmanism had already become an established teaching and Buddhism was a new teaching recently introduced by the Buddha, provided the model for this story.

IKEDA: Fathers often tend to be conservative. Youth, on the other hand, are more likely to possess adventurous spirits. They purely seek the truth, favoring what is right and just over tradition. But fathers are likely to say, “Right or wrong, this is the way it’s been done for years!” This is also a problem attributable to the “generation gap.”

SUDA: The king is too proud and obstinate to listen to the advice of his children and wife.

ENDO: He is surprisingly small-minded. Yet, as a man, I can relate to him!

IKEDA: In the SGI, too, it is often the wife and/or children who begin to practice, with the husband joining last. It is just as the Lotus Sutra describes. The parallel is amazing.

SAITO: A patriarchal system derived from Brahmanism was the foundation of Indian society at the time when Buddhism was spreading. This meant that fathers had absolute control over all members of the family. It was in this context that women and the young were drawn to the new teaching of Buddhism. It seems that this led to conflicts in many families. In fact, there are Buddhist texts that describe such circumstances. This is probably the reason for the “King Wonderful Adornment” chapter.

IKEDA: What we are looking at is a clash between new and old ideas. When new ideas are genuine, they usually cause quite a stir. Simple idealism, or temporary youthful indulgences do not usually give rise to real generational conflict.

ENDO: I can imagine that no one would be particularly upset with family members who decide to embrace that family’s traditional religion.

SUDA: Actually, they might be praised as pious youth!

SAITO: But a revolutionary religion that enables people to change on the deepest level will invariably be opposed by old traditions. This is proof of its genuineness.

IKEDA: It goes without saying that movements that go against common sense or are anti-social in nature will be challenged. But even people who follow reason and strive for the sake of their family's happiness and the well-being of society are met with opposition. That is the fate of those who create a new age.

Overcoming the various conflicts at home one by one and building family harmony is the way to transform society. This reformation that is *kosen-rufu* can only be achieved through the collective transformation of individual families.

SAITO: The "King Wonderful Adornment" chapter tells the story of a son who converts his father. I imagine that for the people of ancient India this must have been a landmark event. As the Japanese Buddhist scholar Dr. Hajime Nakamura points out, "The arbitrary and absolute obedience to the head of the household of traditional Brahmanism has no place in the Buddhist sutras."⁴

IKEDA: In Buddhism, all family members are equally respected as individuals. This is extremely progressive. Buddhism is therefore essentially incompatible with the traditional Japanese concept of religion [as *family-centric*, that is,] that one must adhere to the religion of one's ancestors.

SUDA: Buddhist thought has much in common with the modern concept of human rights. The Japanese modern constitution, which is based on humanism, guarantees freedom of religion to everyone.

IKEDA: From that standpoint, we are talking about a conflict between humanism and old customs that fail to recognize individual rights, rather than between Buddhism and the religions of one's ancestors.

CHANGING THE ERRONEOUS VIEWS OF THE POWERFUL

World-Honored One, these two sons of mine have carried out the Buddha's work, employing transcendental powers and transformations to turn my mind away from heresies, enabling me to abide safely in the Buddha's Law, and permitting me to see the World-Honored One. These two sons have been good friends to me. They wished to awaken the good roots from my past existences and to enrich and benefit me, and for that reason they were born into my household. (LS27, 316–17)⁵

IKEDA: The "King Wonderful Adornment" chapter is not just the story of a family. In telling the story of a royal family, a family that has power, it is describing how a country may be saved by enabling the powerful to embrace Buddhism. If the rulers of the land do not change, people's suffering will continue. It is said, in fact, that seventy to eighty percent of the world's problems exist because of the way governments are run.

SAITO: I agree. In the "King Wonderful Adornment" chapter, it is the Buddha himself who first determines to guide the king to Buddhism.

SUDA: It says, "At that time the Buddha, wishing to attract and guide King Wonderful Adornment, and because he thought with compassion for living beings, preached the

Lotus Sutra” (LS27, 313). The Buddha aspires to lead a country founded on erroneous views to happiness through the supreme teaching of Buddhism.

ENDO: Learning of the Buddha’s spirit, the two sons Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye decide to introduce their parents to the teaching of the Lotus Sutra.

IKEDA: Wishing to reply to the will of their teacher, the Buddha, they take resolute action.

ENDO: They speak first with their mother Pure Virtue. Their mother responds, “You should go to your father, tell him about this, and persuade him to go with you [to hear the Buddha preach].” At this, the two cry, “We are sons of the Dharma King, and yet we have been born into this family of heretical views!” (LS27, 313).

IKEDA: But their mother is strong, saying in effect: “What good will it do to lament your situation!” “Stop complaining!” She encourages them to change their reality.

SUDA: Yes. She tells them to have compassion for their father.

IKEDA: This is an important point. Our strong concern for the happiness of others is crucial. Without compassion, *we* will not be fulfilled and will tend to complain. We will find ourselves swayed and defeated by our circumstances.

The brothers probably couldn’t understand why their father would not embrace their faith even though they were practicing so hard. But that’s nothing but self-pity. If we have a negative attitude, thinking, “Why am I not getting the results I want when I have done so much already?” that is the reason we won’t see results. Faith is not emotionalism. Faith is courage. To become happy, we must have courage.

Queen Pure Virtue possesses the wisdom that comes from compassion. Therefore, she knows that abruptly telling the king about Buddhism won’t work. So she advises her children how to go about it.

SAITO: She tells them: “You should manifest some supernatural wonder for him. When he sees that, his mind will surely be cleansed and purified and he will permit us to go to where the Buddha is” (LS27, 313).

IKEDA: She knows how her husband’s mind works! It is said that behind every great accomplishment there is a woman. True to these words, it is thanks to the boys’ mother that their father changes and the entire land is transformed.

In other words, she understands that just asking their father to change would have no effect. So she instructs them instead to show through their actions how they themselves changed through their faith.

SUDA: The two sons then go straight to their father to demonstrate their supernatural abilities. They leap high into the air and freely walk around and lie down; they produce water and fire from their bodies; they make themselves so huge that their bodies cover the sky and then they return to normal size.

ENDO: They disappear into thin air and then suddenly reappear; they dive into the ground as if it were water, and walk on water as if it were land.

SAITO: The sutra says that they manifest these various supernatural wonders out of genuine love and compassion for their father (cf. LS27, 313–14).

In the Sanskrit text, the mother tells her sons, “If you treat your father with compassion, then he will respond with compassion and understand your intent.”

IKEDA: In fact, King Wonderful Adornment is thrilled to see the supernatural talents of his sons. All parents delight at seeing the splendid growth of their children.

ENDO: The king presses his palms together and says to his sons, “Who is your teacher? Whose disciples are you?” (LS27, 314). The two proudly respond that the Buddha who expounds the Lotus Sutra “is our teacher and we are his disciples” (LS27, 314).

SUDA: At this, the king says, “I would like to go now and see your teacher. You can go with me” (LS27, 314).

ENDO: At this point he’s on the verge of taking faith.

SAITO: I think we can say that in his heart he has already accepted Buddhism.

SUDA: The sons’ strategy works, and they succeed in breaking down the walls in the king’s heart.

FAITH THAT MAKES THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE

IKEDA: Such is the power of actual proof. Nothing is stronger. The king’s sons offer proof of their human revolution. The Daishonin says, “Nothing is more certain than actual proof” (WND, 478); and, “even more valuable than reason and documentary proof is the proof of actual fact” (WND, 599).

Family members in particular need to see proof for they know us best. No matter how great we may present ourselves outside the home, our family clearly sees the reality of our situation. Of course, there are most likely also sides of us that our family is the last to know.

At any rate, parents can see the growth of their children, and a wife can tell when her husband has changed for the better. It is this human revolution that amounts to “supernatural abilities.”

The fact that the Ikegami brothers of the Daishonin’s time were able to guide their father, who had been adamantly opposed to their practice, to the Daishonin’s teaching is surely a demonstration of their noble humanity which enabled them to remain undaunted even in the face of their father’s opposition.

SAITO: “Supernatural ability,” as you mentioned, does not simply mean superhuman power; it refers to a human revolution. The Daishonin says, “Outside of the attainment of Buddhahood, there is no ‘secret’ and no ‘transcendental power’” (*Gosho Zenshu*, p. 753).

SUDA: In saying that Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye display supernatural abilities, the sutra is speaking to the capacity of the people of the time.

IKEDA: That’s probably a fair statement. The Great Teacher T’ien-t’ai of China calls this “preaching the Law in a way that accords with society.” On that premise, it could also be said that the concept of supernatural abilities represents the principle of “making the impossible possible.”

We may casually speak the words “actual proof” and “human revolution,” but in reality these are not easy to achieve. Although many profess faith in Buddhism, those who carry out genuine faith and practice are very few.

We cannot attain Buddhahood by practicing halfheartedly or out of force of habit. There’s no such thing as a self-centered, egotistical Buddhist practice. That wouldn’t be “practicing the Buddha’s teaching,” but practicing one’s own teaching. Only by carrying out faith single-mindedly dedicated to the achievement of kosen-rufu can we change our

karma.

The only way to cause a transformation in those running a country is to demonstrate the true power of the people through courageous prayer and struggle to “make the impossible possible.”

To take on such a struggle with an easygoing attitude will only result in mishaps. We need to be keenly aware of how serious an undertaking it is.

HAVING A HUSBAND WHO IS OPPOSED TO FAITH

SUDA: I heard a wonderful experience by someone who succeeded in changing the karma of her family. Her name is Chieko Yamashita of Chiba Prefecture, and her story was also introduced in the *Seikyo Shimbun*.

Although she is president of a company that operates a bicycle parking lot of approximately 4,000 square yards, when asked what she does she simply smiles and says, “I’m just the bicycle lot grandma.”

IKEDA: I recall that she also has a private community center.

SUDA: That’s right. She achieved her dream of building a private community center. And you gave the center the name Yamashita Glory Community Center. When she received the calligraphy of these words written by you, she took the characters for community center to mean treasure house. She was very moved by your consideration.

ENDO: Was her husband opposed to her practice?

SUDA: Yes. And it was no ordinary opposition either.

They were married in the tumultuous period following the end of the Second World War. Her husband then failed in business, and became obsessed with drinking and gambling.

She explains that eventually her family of four had no place to live, but were given shelter in the corner of a friend’s kitchen. During the day, they would stay in a small park nearby, her infant child crawling around on the ground.

With help, they were able to find a tiny one-room apartment; but they were still destitute.

To make dinner, she would go out with two ten-yen coins and buy ten yen worth each of sardines and spinach. While shopping, the child she carried on her back would cry for some candy. Wishing that she had just ten more yen to buy some, she would search the crowded streets of the outdoor market for dropped coins. She says that she will never forget the bitter pain of not even having ten yen to spare.

IKEDA: I recall that Mrs. Yamashita was from a well-known family.

SUDA: That’s right. She was born in Kagoshima, Kyushu, and apparently lacked for nothing while growing up. However, there was constant discord between her father and mother, and so, not wanting to end up the same way, she approached marriage with extreme caution. Nonetheless, as Mrs. Yamashita puts it, “I wound up having to suffer the same destiny as my mother.”

She wound up leaving her husband and children. She would not have been able to watch the children and work at the same time, and, as her parents had died shortly after the war, she couldn’t ask for their assistance. She couldn’t rely on the help of her husband’s family either, and her children, a boy and a girl, were put into childcare. But they were placed in

separate facilities. Overcome with anguish at the thought of this, she decided to gather her children and return to her husband. What followed were days of living in fear of physical abuse.

ENDO: I hope that nowadays, someone in the same situation would have more options.

SAITO: At that point she had not yet taken faith.

SUDA: Mrs. Yamashita joined the Soka Gakkai in 1965. At the time her husband was unemployed and she was supporting him by selling insurance door-to-door. Her husband joined the Soka Gakkai as well, but only in name, and instead went to extraordinary lengths to keep his wife from practicing.

Every night he would beat her with whatever objects might be handy, demanding that she quit the Soka Gakkai. When he was drunk, he would rail on and on against her faith.

On one occasion, he destroyed her altar with an ax, doused the wood with kerosene and set it on fire. She ran out of the house barefoot, clutching the Gohonzon to her chest. She spent the night locked outdoors chanting daimoku until dawn.

Eventually her husband found work as a subcontractor for a major glass company. But he was reckless with his income and they continued to live in poverty.

Throughout this time, Mrs. Yamashita scrimped and saved with the dream of one day having a house. But when she had finally saved four million yen and gleefully showed her savings passbook to her husband, he snatched it away from her. When she located the passbook in the apartment two days later, her account had a balance of zero. He had thrown all the money away at the racetrack.

Mrs. Yamashita remarked that her senior in faith told her that she was the one who must take ultimate responsibility for her own happiness. She was told, "Unless you change, you will not be able to accumulate good fortune."

She says that "When I heard this, I made up my mind to not give up."

"The Daishonin says, 'Buddhism is like the body, and society like the shadow. When the body bends, so does the shadow' (WND, 1039). I determined to stop swinging between joy and sorrow because of the chaos in my life and to stop complaining about what my husband was or wasn't doing. I decided that since this was my karma, I would take responsibility for overcoming it myself. I would accumulate good fortune. I realized that it was not about anyone else; everything depended on my life condition. I gained profound conviction in the principle of the oneness of life and the environment."

IKEDA: That's the kind of determination we need to have! Once we understand that everything that happens to us enables us to attain Buddhahood in this lifetime, all of our problems will be resolved.

On the other hand, the more we tend to complain and put the blame on others, the longer we are delaying the transformation of our karma.

If we pray to the Gohonzon through all our sufferings and sorrows and firmly resolve that: "This is my destiny. This is my life. I will do my human revolution first and foremost," then a path forward will open without fail.

APPRECIATION FOR THOSE WHO OPPOSE OUR FAITH

SUDA: I think that's really true.

Realizing that feeling sorry for herself wouldn't do anything to bring her good fortune, Mrs. Yamashita exerted herself wholeheartedly in Soka Gakkai activities. In the process, she

was unexpectedly approached about managing some land in front of the train station. In her seventh year of practice, 1972, she was able to open her bicycle parking lot.

More than anything else, Mrs. Yamashita's attitude, her frame of mind, began to change. She came to have sympathy for her husband because he did not understand the joy of faith, and began praying every day that he would change his ways. She came to view her husband as a truly "good friend" for enabling her to deepen her faith.

She explains: "It's amazing. As soon as my resentment toward my husband turned into appreciation he suddenly lost his infatuation with gambling. And he began to pray to the Gohonzon."

In 1976, Mrs. Yamashita's husband was diagnosed with cancer of the esophagus. Her prayer to the Gohonzon was: "Please take half of my life and give it to my husband. Let us fight for kosen-rufu together." Of that time, she says: "I wept at the love and appreciation I now felt for the man it seemed I had cared nothing for. I realized in the depths of my life for the first time that until then I lacked compassion."

When she went to see him at the hospital, her husband, who had not moved from the bed, sat right up. Soon he was able to get out of bed on his own, and, as Mrs. Yamashita describes, "For the first time we became a true married couple, able to talk openly and honestly about anything, about kosen-rufu and the Soka Gakkai."

Her husband began to study Buddhism insatiably. The following year, as though he had completed his mission, he passed away. Seeing his beautiful countenance in death, two close friends decided to take faith, too.

"Through all the negative and positive experiences, my husband taught me about faith. He was truly a 'good friend.' I have now grown into a person who can feel incredible appreciation, knowing that I owe everything to the terrible hardship I experienced."

In addition to transforming her state of life, Mrs. Yamashita has transformed her financial fortune. As she puts it, "Money just keeps coming my way." As was already mentioned, she has been able to realize her long-standing wish of building a private community center. And the friend who had once loaned the Yamashitas the small one-room apartment they lived in has marveled at how happy Mrs. Yamashita has become since joining the Soka Gakkai.

IKEDA: What a wonderful experience! I have heard much about her family. And I have met Mrs. Yamashita at Soka University.

Nothing brings me more joy than seeing how happy members have become through faith. It is what I live for. Everything else is secondary.

Ideally, I would like to meet with each and every member and thank and encourage them. That is how I truly feel. However, as I am but one person, that is simply not possible. But I live each day praying with my entire being to the Gohonzon with that wish in my heart.

I hope therefore that each and every leader will kindly and warmly care for the members in my stead; for they are all children of the Buddha.

UNCROWNED HEROES WHO SERVE THE PEOPLE

IKEDA: Leaders have no right to scold members. They should only serve and treasure them.

If you must be arrogant, then be arrogant toward the powerful. If you must scold someone, then scold those who are evil and malicious. Leaders who cause their members

to suffer are despicable. Leaders who lack compassion and consideration toward their fellow members cannot attain Buddhahood. Leaders who treat the Buddha's children with malice and spite will receive negative effects from their causes.

Each day, from morning to night, I am completely at the service of the people. That's the way it should be. I believe that this is the most noble way to live.

We are discussing King Wonderful Adornment. He is a king adorned with the wonderful benefit of the Mystic Law.

[In "The Record of the Orally Transmitted Teachings" Nichiren Daishonin says: "The benefits of the Mystic Law are used to adorn the six sense organs" (GZ, 779).]

We do not adorn ourselves with the trappings of power. Those who decorate themselves with authority, wealth, honor or fame, are examples of the evil King Wonderful Adornment before he took faith in the Mystic Law. But when we discard these shallow adornments and dedicate ourselves to faith in the knowledge that there is no greater treasure than the Mystic Law, we become a good King Wonderful Adornment. An uncrowned king is the most noble of all.

There are those who become leaders and then, after gaining fame or recognition in society thanks to the SGI, grow arrogant, making something other than faith the most important thing in their lives. Such a person is functioning as a devil.

SAITO: I really think that vanity is the enemy of faith.

PROBLEMS ARE A PART OF LIFE

ENDO: For example, some leaders are ashamed that they have problems, and avoid seeking guidance.

SUDA: There are indeed some who may look disparagingly at someone with problems and think, "And he calls himself a leader!"

IKEDA: Everyone has problems. We are all ordinary people, and it is because we suffer that we practice Buddhism. Such problems as having a child who refuses to go to school, or a husband who doesn't work hard, or a family member who has fallen ill, all exist so that we may advance in our lives. This is the Buddhist principle of "earthly desires are enlightenment."

No one is perfect, and leaders are no exception. To try to be something we are not in order to make ourselves look good only results in suffering for oneself and does nothing for others.

It's important to be ourselves, and to be able to say in all humility: "I have this problem. But I will overcome it. I will exert myself in SGI activities and show proof of my human revolution. This is my situation, but I hope we can work together for kosen-rufu." The important thing is that we become happy in the end. It is only a matter of course that we will be beset with various obstacles along the way.

Suppose there is something wrong with your child. You will not have peace of mind. But you can't die and escape the situation either. That's why we have to do our best. That's what is meant by transforming earthly desires into enlightenment.

If there are those who want to make snide comments about your having problems even though you are practicing or even though you are a leader, then let them. They are the ones who will receive retribution, whereas your negative karma will be erased in like measure.

The important thing is that our lives glow and that we live freely in a manner true to

ourselves. This is what is meant by “the wisdom to illuminate and manifest the true nature of all phenomena.” We need to cause our lives to shine.

Those who put on airs are so out of touch that they don’t even realize their own absurdity.

To live in envy of others is a life based on pre-Lotus Sutra teachings. The Lotus Sutra teaches that we live determined to follow our own path. Faith means to achieve victory in life based on who we truly are, not a made-up image of ourselves. This is the teaching of the “King Wonderful Adornment” chapter.

APPRECIATION LEADS TO GREAT BENEFIT

The two sons then addressed their father and mother, saying: “Excellent, father and mother! And we beg you in due time to go to the place where the Buddha Cloud Thunder Sound Constellation King Flower Wisdom is, attend him in person and offer alms. Why? Because encountering the Buddha is as difficult as encountering the udumbara flower. Or as difficult as it is for a one-eyed turtle to encounter a floating log with a hole in it. We have been blessed with great good fortune from past existences and so have been born in an age where we can encounter the Buddha’s Law.” (LS27, 315)

SAITO: To continue on with the story in this chapter, when the sons hear their father, King Wonderful Adornment, resolves to hear the Buddha, they announce that they will renounce their royal status and devote themselves to Buddhist practice. They do this because “the Buddha is difficult to encounter” (LS27, 315).

SUDA: There is the famous passage here that says that encountering the Buddha is “as difficult as it is for a one-eyed turtle to encounter a floating log with a hole in it” (LS27, 315).

[The Daishonin explains this analogy as follows: There is a turtle that lives at the bottom of the ocean. Once in a thousand years he can rise to the ocean’s surface in hopes of finding a floating sandalwood log on which to float. But the log has to have a hollow that is just the right size to hold him. Also, because the turtle has only one eye, he cannot judge distances, making it difficult for him to reach a log that he happens to see. This analogy is used to describe the difficulty of encountering the Mystic Law. (cf. WND, 957).]

IKEDA: There are infinite life forms in the universe. The earth, and even the smallest garden, is home to countless living entities. Among all of these, we possess the good fortune to have been born as human beings. What’s more, we are able to pray to the Gohonzon, an opportunity so rare that it might only be encountered once in a thousand, ten thousand or a million years.

Moreover, we have been given life right in the midst of world kosen-rufu. How deep are our karmic bonds! What an immense mission we possess! There are no coincidences in Buddhism. Truly, as the sutra says, “We have been blessed with great good fortune from past existences and so have been born in an age where we can encounter the Buddha’s Law” (LS27, 315). To live aware of this solemn fact is the greatest pleasure. It is to overflow with joy.

We should carry out faith single-mindedly, regarding each day as a treasure. When we practice with such excitement and enthusiasm, we receive benefit at once. The two brothers

in the “King Wonderful Adornment” chapter express their determination to practice single-minded faith.

To spend one’s life idling away time, never awakening to one’s mission, is to be like a living corpse. The Daishonin admonishes us, “You must not spend your lives in vain and regret it for ten thousand years to come” (WND, 622).

THE POWER OF WOMEN AND YOUTH

ENDO: King Wonderful Adornment goes to see the Buddha, taking his ranks of ministers and attendants along with him. He is joined by Queen Pure Virtue and the two princes, along with all of their respective attendants.

All the residents of the entire palace convert to Buddhism. Hearing the Buddha preach, the king is “exceedingly delighted” (LS27, 316), and he makes sincere offerings to the Buddha. The Buddha predicts the king’s future enlightenment, telling him he will become a Buddha named Sal Tree King.

The king then turns over his kingdom to his younger brother and, with his entire family, dedicates himself wholeheartedly to practicing the way.

SAITO: With this, it could be said, the entire country changes from a land of erroneous views to a land of justice.

SUDA: This is kosen-rufu.

IKEDA: In this story, the mother and children enable the father, who is in a position of authority, to mend his ways. In other words, a woman and youth stand up and accomplish kosen-rufu. A leader with political and financial power who upholds erroneous views that oppose the Law represents the negative aspect of King Wonderful Adornment. By contrast, the members of the SGI, who are without such political and financial power, can be likened to the queen Pure Virtue and her children Pure Storehouse and Pure Eye.

The Soka Gakkai began with absolutely nothing amid fierce storms of opposition. Solely through the power of the Mystic Law, we have shown actual proof, demonstrated the power of the people and the strength of unit, and progressed in reforming the erroneous views of society.

ENDO: That is what I call miraculous.

SUDA: It is an example of “supernatural ability.”

IKEDA: If this were something that anyone could do, there would be no need for faith. Faith in the Mystic Law is what enables us to achieve the impossible.

ENDO: The sutra says that the king went on to practice the Lotus Sutra for 84,000 years. This could also mean overcoming the so-called 84,000 earthly desires. I think it indicates that he thoroughly adorns his life with the benefit of the Mystic Law, which teaches the principle of transforming earthly desires into enlightenment.

The king addresses the Buddha, saying, “These two sons have been good friends to me. They wished to awaken the good roots from my past existences and to enrich and benefit me, and for that reason they were born into my household” (LS27, 316–17).

IKEDA: He has become a person who truly appreciates his children.

FAMILY MEMBERS ARE ALL “GOOD FRIENDS”

SAITO: Isn't the gist of the Lotus Sutra's teaching on the family that one's family members are “good friends”? They are good friends who help us deepen our faith and develop our humanity. In early Buddhist texts, too, we find such statements as, “Your wife is your foremost friend”⁶ and “The mother is a friend to her family.”⁷

IKEDA: Being members of the same family implies a deep karmic relationship. Speaking of his own family, the Daishonin says, “It is no doubt because of karmic forces that they became my parents, and I, their child” (WND, 993). And with regard to marriage, he says, “This is not a matter of this life alone” (WND, 501).

Since we became a family because of a profound connection, we should help one another become happy as good friends. A family whose members share the lofty goal of *kosen-rufu* and who support one another, help each other and enable each other to grow, is a creative family and a source of personal growth. A home should not be uninviting and closed off from the outside world like a fortress, but an open home that contributes to the community and society aiming to achieve lofty ideals.

ENDO: Speaking of karmic relationships, there is an interesting account about the members of King Wonderful Adornment's family. This is from T'ien-t'ai's *Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra*.⁸

In the past, there were four Buddhists practicing austerities in the latter day of a particular Buddha. But they had nothing to eat and became deadlocked. At that time, one of the four said, “This will not work. I will take care of providing us with food so that the three of you can focus on your Buddhist practice.” And that is what they did.

Thanks to the efforts of the one, the other three were able to attain Buddhahood, accumulating benefit that endured for countless lifetimes. The benefit of the one whose efforts made it possible for the other three was that in every lifetime he became a king; but his benefit did not continue indefinitely. Eventually he was bound to fall into a state of suffering.

Seeing this, the three got together to discuss the situation: “Since we have attained enlightenment thanks to him, we must help him. But now he has become attached to desires and holds erroneous views. The only way to help him will be to persuade him through the power of family love.” They decided that one of them would become his beautiful wife, and the other two would become his wise sons. In this way they became the royal family and led the king to happiness.

IKEDA: That's very interesting.

At the end of the story, T'ien-t'ai explains that Pure Virtue is the bodhisattva Wonderful Sound, who is present in the assembly where Shakyamuni expounds the Lotus Sutra; and that the king's sons are the bodhisattvas Medicine King and Medicine Superior. The king is Bodhisattva Flower Virtue. This is a family bound together over the three existences of past, present and future—united as good friends.

Life is wondrous. From where have human beings come and to where do we go? These questions cannot be answered by science, politics or economics. Only Buddhism can resolve them.

Take someone who has a wonderful family or a wonderful partner. Yes, the person seems happy. But, there is no escaping the four sufferings of birth, old age, sickness and death. At some point they will have to say good-bye. This is the “suffering of having to part from

those one loves.”

But if we believe in the Mystic Law, then we can be together with our loved ones in lifetime after lifetime. Sometimes we may be related as parent and child, other times as husband and wife, other times as siblings or close friends. While the relationships may take various forms, we can be confident that we will be born near each other again and again. As the sutra says, this is “so that together [we] may reach the place where the treasure is” (LS7, 141). The Mystic Law is truly amazing. This principle is taught to us by King Wonderful Adornment’s family.

If, on the other hand, we never want to see the person again, then of course we will not have to be born together with them! We are completely free in this regard.

ON DIVORCE

SUDA: Getting stuck with someone you never want to see again is to experience the “suffering of having to meet with those whom one hates.” It happens sometimes that people who fall in love and get married reach a point where they can’t stand the sight of each other! Such conflict may result in divorce, but in some situations it might be best to look at the problem as one’s karma. Should married couples work hard at changing their karma by staying together?

IKEDA: This is something that only the people involved can decide. No one else has the right to say that anyone either should or should not get divorced. Nor can anyone say a person has no faith because they are divorced. Divorce is a matter of personal choice.

Whether people get divorced or not, the important thing is that they become happy, that they do their human revolution. Whether someone is married or not, has children or not, of utmost importance is happiness. This is what faith is about. For happiness exists within our own life.

We are born alone and we die alone. We live so that we may transform ourselves in this lifetime. That’s why we need to do our best, regarding those around us as “good friends” who help us develop our faith and viewing everything we do as part of our Buddhist practice.

Someone once asked President Toda this question: “Things are not going very well between my husband and me. Should I try to stick it out? Or do you think I ought to consider getting separated?” He replied, “I can’t tell you what to do about your marriage. I can neither tell you not to get divorced, nor to get divorced. The only thing I can say is that unless you break through your karma to have such a husband, then, even if you do separate, you are bound to experience the same kind of suffering in the future. And if you’re going to have to go through the same suffering anyway, then perhaps it’s not too late to do something about it in your present marriage.”⁹

ENDO: Personally, I think that where children are concerned, parents should carefully consider their options if their decision could cause the children suffering.

SAITO: President Ikeda, you once told someone in answer to a question: “Whether people stay married or get divorced is a private issue, and it is up to them to decide. But it is important to remember that building one’s happiness on the misfortune of others is not the way of Buddhism. This should be the basis for consideration.”

IKEDA: It’s ideal if the parents of a child get along well. But if they don’t and end up in divorce, that doesn’t necessarily mean that the child will turn out badly. There are many

cases where children grow into fine, upstanding people precisely because of such hardships.

SUDA: There are also people who get remarried and become happier than ever.

IKEDA: The bottom line is that we must look at ourselves closely and do our human revolution in the place we are now. Then we must make our own decisions.

As long as we have rock-solid faith, we will become happy without fail. No matter what happens, as long as we have the faith to continue advancing toward the achievement of kosen-rufu without giving up our practice, we will be victorious in the end. This is what we need to understand.

SUDA: I see.

IKEDA: But if people do get divorced, rather than brooding over the past, it would be wonderful if they could look at the experience as a valuable lesson and work for kosen-rufu even harder than before. And I would hope that those around them would provide warm support. I also hope that those who are in single-parent families will not feel lonely, but will instead open their hearts and expand their circle of friends.

The fact is that most marriages are not 100 percent successful. Some have gone so far as to say that ninety-nine percent of all marriages are unsuccessful!

In reality, many families who appear to have everything going for them actually have many problems. It was the French essayist Montaigne who said “There is scarcely less vexation in the government of a family than of an entire state.”¹⁰

ENDO: Isn't it healthy for couples to quarrel?

IKEDA: Having the energy to argue is a sign of good health! When the two people in a relationship share similar conditions, it is only natural that they will lock horns from time to time. On the other hand, if one party begins to outgrow the other, then the two will probably not have serious confrontations, because their states of life are so different.

It would be great if we could live cheerfully, enjoying life to the extent that we regard our partner's nagging as a sign of his or her good health and proof that he or she is still alive and kicking. When we develop a broad state of life, then even our partner's ranting and raving will sound like the sweet song of a bird.

PATIENCE IS THE KEY TO HAPPINESS

IKEDA: At any rate, the important thing is love and compassion. From that understanding all a couple can do is chant daimoku together with their sights set on a lofty goal and strive for true happiness.

Even married people were once strangers. Without patience and the effort to understand one another, things are not likely to go well. Patience is necessary for a couple to live together, earn a living, protect their home and educate their children while dedicating themselves for the sake of others.

We need patience in order to become happy. There are many who dream about happiness without being patient. But that is merely a dream; it is a fairy tale. It is to wish for a childish, easy life. This illusion breaks up many marriages. The pursuit of such happiness can only end in misery.

It is important to make steady efforts to construct something together. From there, real love develops. Real love means wanting to live with the other person throughout eternity.

Real marriage is when you have been married for twenty-five years and feel an even deeper love than you did when you first met. Love deepens. Love that does not is merely on the level of simple likes and dislikes.

SUDA: Patience is necessary for happiness. This is a key point.

IKEDA: Daily life is reality. Therefore, it is necessary that we earn an income to support our families, and it is important for a couple to listen to each other. Men in particular should listen to what women have to say. It is also important for a couple to compliment and praise each other. It could be for anything—praising one another is what matters. Nothing comes from pointing out the other person's faults. That's just foolishness.

ALL IT TAKES IS ONE "SUN"

IKEDA: One person in the family must decide to brighten the home. We have to decide, "As long as I'm around, any situation will be a bright one." If we become a "sun," there will be no darkness wherever we go in the world. If there is one person in the home who is like the sun, the entire family will be illuminated.

All we need to do is become people overflowing with good fortune who share their boundless fortune with their families. If that is our conviction, then our families will surely embrace faith as well.

In the event that only one person in a family practices, he or she will be protected on all sides by the four leaders of the Bodhisattvas of the Earth — Superior Practices, Boundless Practices, Pure Practices and Firmly Established Practices. In addition, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas in the ten directions as well as all protective functions in the universe will join forces and protect the person and the person's entire family. There is no need to feel lonely. The important thing is not to grow impatient, but to be considerate of the feelings of others, thus leading them to Buddhism.

We must not be judgmental. If we give up on the person we are trying to share faith with because it is difficult, we will only inhibit the person's growth. It will inhibit our own growth as well. Rather, we should pray wholeheartedly that, "This person will change"; "Since he possesses Buddhahood within, it is sure to blossom in time. I will bring it to bloom."

If one's parents do not practice, then rather than getting frustrated, it is more valuable to decide, for example, "If Dad won't chant, I'll chant enough for the both of us."

Regarding his own parents the Daishonin says, "Before I die, I will transfer the great blessings deriving from my practice to my parents who gave me life" (WND, 402). There are many interpretations, but I think the Daishonin is teaching us that we should have the desire to enable our parents to take faith while they are still alive.

ENDO: And if they should die without taking faith?

IKEDA: Since we are reborn quickly after we die, there's nothing to worry about! Life is eternal, and daimoku will reach them without fail.

Anyway, we will be better off if we look at everything that happens as moving in a positive direction.

RAISING CHILDREN WHO LOVE THE SGI

SUDA: How do we encourage our children to take faith in Buddhism?

IKEDA: The most important thing is to help them learn to respect and love the SGI without pressuring them. Since faith is a lifetime issue, it's enough that they develop their understanding over time. It's probably not wise to be inflexible and try to force them to practice.

We need to teach our children the spirit to cherish and protect the SGI. I hope parents will raise their children to really love the SGI. If children have that spirit, they will absolutely become fine people. To boast about one's children without teaching them this spirit is the attitude of the Mother of Demon Children who is depicted in the Lotus Sutra.

SAITO: Unfortunately, in some cases, the children of senior leaders or of members who are celebrities do not participate in Gakkai activities. If parents are making it appear as though they are working for kosen-rufu, while at home they speak ill of and criticize their fellow members, and especially if they arrogantly belittle the SGI, it will be acutely reflected in their children.

SUDA: One high school student remarked, "After my mom gets a phone call about activities, she always lets out a sigh. It doesn't seem like she is enjoying her practice. Is it okay to have that kind of faith?" Fortunately in this case, the child knew that there was once a time when the mother practiced enthusiastically.

IKEDA: Of course, the failure of children to practice cannot necessarily be attributed to a problem with the faith of the parents. We have to view children in the long term. It is not uncommon for those considered to be problem children to turn out to be thoughtful and down-to-earth.

However, the bottom line is that everything is ultimately decided by the parents' faith. In particular—and I say this based on the experiences of hundreds of thousands of people—the faith of the mother is crucial. This is what is meant by "consistency from beginning to end." "Beginning," may be interpreted as the faith of the parents; and "end" the faith of the children. There is essentially no separation between the two.

It is up to us to demonstrate through our example the spirit of treasuring the Gohonzon and the SGI, which is dedicated to kosen-rufu. As long as we have such a spirit, everything will work out in the end.

If parents practice joyfully, consequently receiving great benefit as they advance, their children will naturally understand. No matter how we might treasure and pamper our children, it will all count for nothing if we do not teach them this spirit. To raise decent human beings is no easy task.

If people ridicule the SGI even inwardly—the organization dedicated to realizing the Buddha's intent and decree—they will come to be ridiculed by their family and those around them.

Earlier we talked about "good friends." It is important to choose wisely the people with whom we associate. If we wish to seek the correct Law, we need to seek the right person. If we get involved with the wrong people, then no matter how hard we practice, we will not gain benefit. Herein lies the profound significance of the SGI.

At any rate, when it comes to faith it is important that parents wisely guide their children. It is also helpful to ask for the support of the youth division leaders responsible for future division activities.

When it comes to matters other than faith, too, I hope that parents will be friends to their children and listen to what they have to say. In particular, while it may be okay for a mother to keep after her children, it's not a good idea for a father to shout at them. It's also

important to note that if both parents scold a child at the same time, that leaves the child with nowhere to turn.

ENDO: It's crucial to listen to children. Reflecting on my own situation, I can see that there have been times when I have allowed my busy schedule to keep me from listening to my own children.

IKEDA: I recall the case of a woman who was the only person practicing in her family. Her husband was always condemning the Soka Gakkai. But she took it all and held it inside, never complaining to her children. She felt that grumbling to her children would only make them think that their parents were fighting over her faith.

She quietly took all of her sufferings to the Gohonzon, praying by herself each day. Her children eventually grew up and awakened to faith. They realized that they were able to take faith because of the diligent prayers of their mother.

SHARING OUR HEARTS WITH OUR CHILDREN

ENDO: What about children who are lonely because their parents are always off doing SGI activities?

IKEDA: The issue is whether or not parents have the children's respect. I hope parents share their feelings about SGI activities by explaining that they are striving for the benefit of others and society. This way children can feel proud of their parents.

It is also vital that children know their parents love them, so that they realize the reason their parents are working so hard is precisely because of that love. I hope parents will be considerate of their children.

When there is no time, we should be diligent in leaving notes or communicating by phone. We should also use wisdom to come up with ways to spend time with our children. It's about letting our children know we care. Even just making a point to look in their eyes each morning and exchange kind words can make a difference.

ENDO: Having the time doesn't necessarily mean that things will go well, does it? There are some cases where a gulf exists between parent and child even though they spend time together.

IKEDA: Sometimes not having that much time together can keep the relationship fresh and exciting.

SUDA: I have also heard some men complaining about being left alone because their wives are always out doing activities.

SAITO: I'm sure that husbands who do not practice probably feel that the SGI has taken their family from them. I imagine they would like to be paid more attention to.

ENDO: That's why treasuring those family members who don't practice is important.

RESPECT AND APPRECIATE ALL FAMILY MEMBERS

IKEDA: Even a little consideration goes a long way. When visiting or calling a member on the phone, we should be courteous and attentive to even the smallest concerns of their family members, particularly if the family is not practicing.

SUDA: And it's always important to be pleasant when calling members at home.

IKEDA: Whether practicing or not, people should be respected. We mustn't judge people based on their level of involvement in Gakkai activities or their degree of practice. Such judgements should be completely done away with, and we should use common sense in our encounters with people, treating everyone with sincerity and respect.

Even if someone is the only one in the family practicing, it is because of the other family members that the person is able to do activities. Thanks to the support of one's spouse, parents or in-laws, for example, one can go out and participate in activities with peace of mind. We should respect and have appreciation toward those who make it possible for SGI members to practice.

Just like the past lifetime of the family of King Wonderful Adornment, SGI activities are often made possible because there are other family members taking care of the family's finances and the home. Looking at it in this way, one cannot help but have respect and appreciation for those people.

Of course, great benefit accrues to family members as well. Buddhism is vast and encompassing.

SAITO: President Ikeda, I recall your having once honored the fathers of youth division members with titles of "honorary chapter leader" and "honorary area leader." At first, I was surprised at this.

But you said to the leaders in charge, "Please present them with the title after clearly explaining the immense responsibilities of a chapter or area leader, and how many people such a leader has to look after."

This left a deep impression on one of the youth division members. I heard him say, "President Ikeda taught me to respect and appreciate my father as a human being, as the man who has raised me."

IKEDA: Family is family. We must not divide people into categories of member and non-member. Also, it is ridiculous to bring organizational positions into the home. If a public prosecutor went home with the attitude of a public prosecutor, the family would suffocate.

SUDA: The other day, President Ikeda, you discussed an episode of Britain's Queen Victoria in a speech. On one occasion the queen and her husband had a fight, and her husband shut himself up in his room. Intending to apologize, the queen knocked on the door and said, "This is the Queen. Please open up." But he would not comply. Each time she came to the door, he asked, "Who's there?" To which she replied, "The Queen." And he would not open the door. But when in response to "Who's there," she replied, "Your wife," he opened the door right away. I think that this episode gets at the subtleties of human nature.

IKEDA: When visiting a member at home, I think it's wise to greet the other family members with sincerity and respect. Small things are important.

Earlier we talked about a husband feeling left out. Suppose the wife of this man receives a call from a fellow member while she is preparing dinner. Unless it's something urgent, she could ask the caller if she can call back shortly, and then do so after dinner. I don't think her husband would have a problem with this.

But if she were to drop everything and give priority to the phone call and treat her husband as secondary to her activities, then it would probably not be unreasonable for him to feel somewhat bitter. If this kind of thing were to happen repeatedly, it would naturally drive them apart. A little consideration actually goes a long way.

SUDA: There are some people who think only of themselves, forgetting about the feelings of their family who have taken care of things around the house while they were out doing activities. Some people, on returning home from a meeting, simply say, “I’m tired” or “I still have some calls to make,” or they ramble on about their exciting day, without asking about anyone else.

ASSUMING THAT THINGS WILL SOMEHOW WORK OUT IS NOT FAITH

IKEDA: It’s really important to take into account people’s individual circumstances and living conditions.

For example, Japan is presently in a recession. In many families, the husband has to concentrate solely on his work to make ends meet for his family. Under such circumstances, there are some cases when the wife needs to encourage her husband to chant daimoku and then focus on doing his best at work. There are also some instances when she may need to encourage him to exert himself fully in activities and thereby accumulate good fortune. We need to judge these situations wisely.

Reality is harsh. The worst thing is to be irresponsible. To think that things will somehow work out just because we are practicing Buddhism is a misunderstanding of faith. After we pray for something, we need to struggle with all our might to actualize it. This is true faith.

To win in society by showing proof is the way to achieve victory in the family and the path to kosen-rufu. With the attitude to make the impossible possible, we must pray “as earnestly as though to produce fire from damp wood, or to obtain water from parched ground” (WND, 444); we must win. This is what is meant by “supernatural ability.” It is through this kind of effort that we will win the trust of society.

At the end of the “King Wonderful Adornment” chapter, the king makes the following pledge to the Buddha, “From this day on I will no longer follow the whims of my own mind, nor will I give way to heretical views or to arrogance, anger, or other evil states of mind” (LS27, 317). This shows how this person of power has changed.

Although he had been unable to recognize the true teaching because of his own selfishness, egoism, arrogance and feelings of jealousy, through the struggles of his wife and sons he awakens to the true teaching. He is transformed from a person who lives only for himself into a person who lives for the people.

A NEW “AGE OF PHILOSOPHY”

IKEDA: The “king” represents the political arena. In a broader sense, he represents economics and other workings of society. But the “King Wonderful Adornment” chapter teaches that these things alone do not bring happiness; a correct philosophy is necessary.

Politics and economics are means. The end is human happiness. To achieve this end, what is needed most is a philosophy that can answer the questions: “What is life?” and “What is happiness, and how can it be achieved?”

In my opinion, the twenty-first century must become a profound “age of life,” an “age of philosophy,” going beyond the exigencies of politics and economics. We are pioneers of this transition. We are changing the “evil king,” that is, all the negatives of society, into the positives of good “King Wonderful Adornment.” And we are forging this path for the world to follow.

To be continued

1. Editor's Note: All quotations are from the newly published translation *The Writings of Nichiren Daishonin* (abbreviated as WND) (Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 1999), unless otherwise stated.
2. *Toda Josei Zenshu* (Collected Writings of Josei Toda) (Tokyo: Seikyo Shimbunsha, 1982), vol. 2, p. 300–301.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 294.
4. Hajime Nakamura, *Genshi Bukkyo no Seikatsu Rinri* (Life Ethics of Early Buddhism), Nakamura Hajime Senshu (Selected Writings of Hajime Nakamura), vol. 17 (Tokyo: Shunjusha, 1995), p. 254.
5. 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 then the page number.
6. Nakamura Hajime Senshu, *Ibid.*, p. 197.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 292.
8. Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra (*Hokke Mongu*) by the Great Teacher T'ien-t'ai of China, vol. 10.
9. *Toda Josei Zenshu* vol. 2, p. 283–84.
10. *The Macmillan Book of Proverbs, Maxims, and Famous Phrases*, ed. Burton Stevenson (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1948), p. 757.