

THE NEW HUMAN REVOLUTION
'JWELED SWORD'
VOLUME 8, CHAPTER 2, PARTS 9–10

'Wherever I went, the circumstances were the worst they could be, but I won against all obstacles and met Josei Toda's expectations,' Shin'ichi Yamamoto says. 'That is the way of a disciple. The Soka Gakkai does not need young people who pretend to work hard but are in reality lax and self-indulgent.'

At the Suiko-kai guidance session, a young man named Genji Samejima asked Shin'ichi Yamamoto, "What does it mean to have resolute faith?"

Before joining the Soka Gakkai, Samejima had belonged to the Hokkeko, another lay organization of Nichiren Shoshu. He became a member of the Soka Gakkai after Shin'ichi had become its president. After graduating from Tokyo University, he went to work for a certain company, but later was hired by the Soka Gakkai Headquarters and assigned as staff of the *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai's daily newspaper.

Opinions about Samejima were divided among the other staff. Some described him as a serious and talented young man of good character, while others were convinced that he was overly ambitious and had left the Hokkeko for the rapidly growing Soka Gakkai because he saw more personal opportunity there.

Shin'ichi was aware of this duality in Samejima's personality. He also knew that Samejima would frequently criticize senior leaders behind their backs and act as though he was the only one who really cared about the organization's future. Everyone, to some extent, has two sides. Buddhism teaches that good and evil exist inseparably in the human heart—that our minds contain both the state of life of the Buddha, Shakyamuni, and of Devadatta, who sought to destroy the Buddha. Shin'ichi wanted to help this young person, who had come to the Soka Gakkai to change his life, realize his full potential at any cost.

In answer to Samejima's question, he said: "People of resolute faith are those who stick with the Soka Gakkai throughout their lives and support their seniors who are devoted to spreading Nichiren Daishonin's teachings. Those who stay with the organization through thick and thin, no matter how others may criticize, attack or try to make them leave, are people of resolute faith. That's all there is to it!"

As he said this, Shin'ichi looked Samejima directly in the eye. He was determined to watch over this young man for the next 30 years. Shin'ichi knew that time would reveal who was genuine. If Samejima could continue his faith in earnest for 30 years, then he would gain mastery over himself and show wonderful proof of achieving human revolution. But if he was dominated instead by ambition and tried to use the Soka Gakkai for his own objectives, in that time he would leave the organization.

Shin'ichi put a lot of energy into teaching and training Samejima and even gave him important responsibilities within the organization. Somewhere along the way, however, Samejima became consumed by the desire to control the Soka Gakkai himself. He later became a vice president, but in the end he turned against the Soka Gakkai and took the sad road of one who has abandoned faith.

The members continued asking questions, sharing opinions and giving reports. One young man asked Shin'ichi: "There are only a handful of young men's division members in the area I am responsible for, and the situation is very tough. What can I do to turn things around?"

Shin'ichi immediately replied, "You need to rise to action!" Tension swept the room, and everyone fell silent. "Youth have to stand alone! Then, everything will change. That is what I have done. After President Toda died, the media and others began to predict that the Soka Gakkai would fall apart. There were some older leaders who changed their attitude after Mr. Toda's death, taking advantage of his absence to become willful and selfish. Some plotted to exploit the organization. I realized that if nothing were done, the Soka Gakkai might really fall apart. This is why I took a stand. As general administrator of the organization, I worked behind the scenes, taking full responsibility for everything. I was 30 years old at the time.

"My spirit all along has been to stand up alone amid the hardest of circumstances. This was the case when, as a member of the staff of Kamata Chapter, I took the lead in introducing people to the Daishonin's Buddhism. At the time, the number of households joining even the largest chapters in any given month hovered around 100. I knew that at this rate we would never reach Mr. Toda's goal of 750,000 member households. Who was going to do it? It was up to his disciples. So I waged a battle, and in one month Kamata Chapter achieved a new membership record of 201 households.

"I was 24 years old. There were of course men's and women's division members in the chapter. In fact, almost all of the leaders were older than I was. But in the end, they all fought alongside me. Why? Because I was so determined. I was more determined than anyone. They all thought: 'We can't do this on our own, but if we do what this person tells us, we can break through our current deadlock.' And I produced results.

"Wherever I went, the circumstances were the worst they could be, but I won against all obstacles and met Mr. Toda's expectations. That is the way of a disciple. The Soka Gakkai doesn't need young people who pretend to work hard but are in reality lax and self-indulgent.

"I want *you* to stand up! You have to rise to action! I'll be watching!"

Daisaku Ikeda appears in the
novel as Shin'ichi Yamamoto.
The events take place in 1963.