

What About...? Wearing the 'World Tribune'?

Readers seem to like the *World Tribune's* new paper stock. Over the next few months, we're hoping to improve it further (there are a lot of wonderful kinds of paper to choose from).

Paper was very important to Nichiren Daishonin. In his circumstances, it was in short supply, and he welcomed every scrap. Paper enabled him to write letters, thus clarifying and preserving his teachings. What's more, he inscribed the Gohonzon on paper and states, "If a piece of wood or paper did not have both material and spiritual aspects, or lacked the inherent cause to manifest a spiritual nature, then it would be futile to rely upon it as an object of worship" (*The Major Writing of Nichiren Daishonin*, vol. 1, p. 48). Clearly, the Daishonin saw profound value in paper.

One interesting fact is that in addition to using paper to convey Buddhism, the Daishonin used it as clothing. He writes: "I have the leaves of plants for my floor covering and wear clothes made of paper, so that my body becomes as cold as a stone, and the things I have to eat are like ice" (MW-7, 251). He's referring to a kind of inexpensive garment made by gluing together sheets of thick paper. It was then crumpled to make it pliable and treated with persimmon tannin.

This passage underscores the difficulty of the Daishonin's circumstances — and gives me a new perspective on the paper on which the *World Tribune* is printed.

— LISA JONES, Staff Writer