



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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You are cordially invited to attend the
Spring Grand Ceremony
For Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama
天地金乃神様 御大祭

Date: Sunday, April 13, 2014

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Place: Konko Mission of Wahiawa

Sermon: Rev. Rodney Takashi Yano

Kibimai: Ms. Ke'ala Takahashi

Naorai fellowship lunch will follow. Let's receive the divine arrangements of being able to worship on this very important day.

“Konnichi made no orei” Perpetual expression of appreciation for the elements of being blessed till this day.

By Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

It is my habit to take note on a 3X5 slip of paper, for any ideas of interest and stack them into a file container for later reference such as when I compose speeches. Lately I jot down one of the teachings of the Founder Konko Daijin in regards to the good health we have been enjoying, which we may take for granted. In blessedness, my family has enjoyed good health for all these years. I have extended my appreciation to Kami-Sama for the enjoyment of good health, good relations and financial stability for the sustenance of my family members, the church members and all that are connected to us. It is just an extended practice of mindfulness for extending thanks and gratefulness for the blessings I have enjoyed thus far. That idea can be expressed as “Konnichi made no orei” or extending thanks for any and all blessings I have enjoyed thus far.

From the day that both my wife and I have arrived at the Konko Mission of Wahiawa to take over the responsibility of the church, I have kept extending my thanks and gratefulness for any elements of blessings I have been enabled to identify to Kami-Sama for 37 years. I feel overwhelmed how fast

time passes and the fact I have been enabled maintain the same pattern of feeling gratitude for Kami-Sama in the same manner I did just 37 years ago. It could be a blessing that we have never expressed our anguish and frustration for our engagement in the operation of the church.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Rev. Michio Miyake of Konko Church of Tokiwadai who gave me a message in celebration of our departure for our missionary work in Hawaii. We made a courtesy visit to greet the minister who has provided a momentous opportunity for me to get engaged in ministry of the Konkokyo faith when I was in Tokyo. He jotted down a message on the cover of the wrapping of the goshinmai sacred rice. The message reads 「有り難きこの思召いつまでも忘れずに行け人助けの道」。I have interpreted this message in this manner, “Never fail to appreciate this wondrous divine mission granted to you for saving people” dated September 27, 1977. I have placed this Goshinmai sacred rice packet at the Toritsugi-Mediation Desk and have seen the message every day. Interestingly, the message has never faded away. The message has the same line of meaning of “Konnichi made no orei” or extending thanks for any and all blessings I have enjoyed thus far. I have been deeply appreciative of the message as years pass by. Without the presence of my wife and family for our missionary work, and the blessing we have enjoyed till this day, I would not have been able to share this thought with you today.

The 4th Konko Sama used the expression of “*sewaninaru subeteni reiwo iu kokoro heiwa umidasu kokoro to iwan*” or the heart of trying to extend thanks for all elements in life will contribute in keeping peace. He shared the concept of “*Inochi no shin no hataraki*” or the core function of any living things. He quoted a tree for example.

The following is my interpretation of his message. When a baby is born, we exchange our greeting by saying Omedetou gozaimasu and arigatou gozaimasu among the people involved. When the child grows up and becomes one year old, they also exchange the greeting of celebration by saying, “Omedeto gozaimasu, and arigato gozaimasu in return.” When the child begins to enroll in a school, they also repeat the same tradition of exchanging greetings of celebration. When the child graduates from school, they also keep exchanging the greeting of celebration. And we try to exchange greetings of celebration continuously till we die as long as there are no elements that may prevent that tradition. When we encounter such an occasion that we can no longer exchange the greetings of celebration, we can encounter hardship.

The same vital function can also be identified in any living things. For example, look at the tree in the yard. A tree continues to grow through the life sustaining function given to it. It is a given condition that the root system takes up needed water and nutrients from the soil, and the leaves also create food for the body of the tree through the blessings of the sunlight. If there is no sunlight, there would be no tree. If there is no water, there would be no tree. The land, the soil, the water, the air and the sunlight are all given conditions of sustaining a tree. We identify them as blessings of Kami. If a tree stops to take up the water and nutrients from the soil, the tree may wilt down and die. The same is true, if the leaves and roots stop to create food for the body, the tree would die as well. The function of the roots and the leaves can be likened to the function of our expressing our thought of joy, thankfulness, appreciation or whatever expressions we use in celebrating the state of blessedness.

Konko-Sama also showed us a simple formula to see if we have been in line with the heart of Kami and walking the right path for happiness and prosperity. The formula is to see if we have the heart of thanks and appreciation for any elements in our daily life. He shared his thought that he extends his thanks for the glasses he puts on, for the pen and a sheet of paper he can write with, and the list goes on and on. The message is very simple, yet powerful.

Bulletin Board

Monthly Services for April 2014

- 1 Tue** -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
 5 Sat -Church clean up for Grand Ceremony (8 am)
 6 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
 -Honolulu Church Spring Grand Service (11 am)
13 Sun -Wahiawa Church Spring Grand Ceremony (11 am)
 20 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
 -Waipahu Church Spring Grand Svc. & 40th Memorial Service for the late Rev. Santaro Sonoda (11 am)
27 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)

May 2014

- 1 Thr** -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama (7:30 pm)
3 Sat -Rev. Rodney Yano & Ms. Fong Yip's Wedding
 4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
 -Wailuku Church Spring Grand Service (11am)

H.C.R.P. Meeting

The monthly meeting of the Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace will be held at the Gedatsu Church on Monday, April 14, 2014 at 1:00 p.m.

Monthly Volunteer Activity

We will make a visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility for our regular volunteer activity of interacting with the hospitalized people on Friday, April 18 from 10:00 a.m.

Wedding for Rev. Rodney T Yano & Ms. Fong Yip

The Rev. Rodney Yano, the second son of the Revs. Yasuhiro and Reiko Yano will get married to Ms. Fong Yip from San Francisco on Saturday, May 3, 2014 at Haleiwa Ali'i Beach Park.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits



April

Gilbert Toshio Iwasa	4/9/1999
Zenji Takahashi	4/12/1966
Yoshiro Kamitomo	4/16/2000
Kiku Takahashi	4/26/1967
Robert Mendoz	4/27/2006
Shin'ichi Furushima	4/30/1996

If you wish to have a name added to the church Mitama listing or removed, please contact Rev. Yasuhiro Yano.

Insight into the teachings in “Tenchi wa Kataru” or “Voice of the Universe”

The following are excerpts of series of an English translation of “Tenchi wa Kataru—Kanwa-shu” or “Compilation of Insight into the teachings in the Voice of the Universe” which contains 400 selected teachings from the original “Konkokyo Kyoten” or the “Konkokyo Scriptures.” Three authors, namely, the Revs. Mikio Seto, Yasushi Hata and Matsutarō Kōsaka contributed the insightful articles. The translation is provided by Yasuhiro Yano. (Reference pages 76, 77 and 78)

No. 76

There are people whose hearts change easily. Those who rely on these people will get angry or distressed. Instead of turning to others, turn to Kami. Kami will listen and grant any request that you may have.
(II Oshiki Masu 1-2 Kyoten page 471)

Relying on others will result in suffering

The quoted teachings in the section 2 refer to various ways of life that directly contribute to people's suffering. The first quoted teaching in the page 76 shows what people in general rely on in life and how they should deal with the consequences.

The Chinese characters “人間” represents a human being. The combination of two Chinese characters,

namely, “人” means human being, and “間” means space, implies the inter-dependent nature of human being. The most ideal human relationship can be based on mutual trust and respect. But we can hardly enjoy such an ideal relationship with others in reality. It would be a commonly observed transitional nature of human relationships that during an initial encounter with someone, they try to establish a trusting relationship. But as has been pointed out by the Founder, “There are people whose hearts change easily.” The elements of trust and love have been replaced with the heart of depending on and relying on each other with lesser trust and love.

Even the relationship of depending on and relying on each other can deteriorate to the stage of distrust and anger with each other because of the ever-changeable nature of the human heart.

Then how we can deal with such relationships? The Founder showed two elements to deal with. One is we should be constantly mindful of the unstable nature of our own hearts. The other is, “Instead of turning to others, turn to Kami.” This is the most viable manner to avert to encounter difficulties in life.

Being aware of the nature of the ever-changing human heart may give out a wrong impression that we lack warm-heartedness, and are quick to judge others. But a person who exercises such mindfulness will ensure to build a truly trusting relationship with others because he will direct his heart toward Kami and extend his thoughts and prayers for others.

No. 77

If one is too intellectual, he sometimes fails to retain the blessings he receives. This is because he thinks he knows everything and feels superior to Kami.

(III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 152 Kyoten page 869)

Relying on intelligence alone will result in suffering

Human suffering could be attributed to human-oriented intelligence and knowledge. Human intelligence and wisdom are vital elements for a successful life, but relying on those elements alone exceedingly may contribute to negatively inclined consequences.

Many of the modern issues, such as global warming caused by the excessive production of CO2 gas; environmental problems caused by excessive destruction of the natural environment; agricultural chemical contaminations; nuclear power issues; bioethical issues and so forth, could be attributed to intellectual and knowledge-oriented endeavors in pursuit of fulfillment and human greed.

Even in the world of religion, excessive exercise of human-oriented wisdom and cleverness may not contribute for a believer to experience divine existence and get blessed through the practice of faith.

The primary purpose of intelligence and knowledge is to study tangible and measurable elements. On the other hand, in the religious world, to practice faith is to deal with intangible and immeasurable elements such as Kami and divine blessings. Each side purses own different interests and the way to deal with their interests are also different.

People who have excessive confidence in their own intellectual power have an inclination in relying on only their own acquired intelligence and knowledge in understanding blessed elements of Kami. If they cannot understand elements of the spiritual world through their application of intellectual methods, they try to interpret their finding in their academic manners or reject what could not be explained in their standards. This approach in understanding elements of the spiritual world may deny the blessings they already have enjoyed. If they rely on their own intellectual power alone, they try to understand and judge Kami through their learned intellectual methods. Those people would not be able to understand Kami and keep themselves away from getting blessed in accordance with the religious traditions.

Acquired intelligence and the power of knowledge do not represent the wholeness of an individual and they also do not empower an individual the almighty power. People who hold misconceptions about the power of acquired intelligence and knowledge will encounter difficulty.

No. 78

Do not be selfish and greedy. Do not do selfish things. People who are driven by selfishness end up having problems. *(II Onishi Hide 15 Kyoten page 463)*

The eventuality of selfishness and greed is suffering

We are quite aware that those who enjoy life full of greed are to encounter hardship in life. Those who live such a way of life may torment not only themselves, but also affect the people around them in the same manner.

The original Japanese message of the quoted statement reads 「勝手な欲をするな、勝手なことをしてはいけない。みな我欲なことをするから、困ることになる」. This original message can be translated as follows, “Do not indulge yourself in pursuit of your own self-centered desires. You shall not commit any attempt

to get fulfilled in your self-centered desires. All those who have been driven in pursuit of fulfilling self-centered desires are to encounter difficulties.” Through close examination of the original Japanese statement, it is apparent that the Founder didn’t deny any and all desires we may have intuitively. He only denied the type of desires expressed in the original Japanese that states, 「勝手な欲, 我欲」 (both expression may mean the same) or “your own self-centered desires.”

In general, in the world of religion, desires are perceived to be wrong. But the Founder clearly stated that there are two types of desires. There are innate desires to perpetuate life for generations, and there are wrongful desires that needs to be eliminated.

I used the expression of “*atheyoi*” or “preferable” in the original Japanese writing, but the true nature of desires shall be appreciated. For example, appetite for food, sexual desires, hunger for attention and other vital human desires shall be basically appreciated. Appetite for foods and sexual desires are the basic elements for us to perpetuate our family lineage from generation to generation. Both the hunger for attention and desire for wealth also work as driving forces for advancement of our life. For example, we can easily understand the reason for our appetite for food. When a person recovers from an illness and regains a good appetite for food, everybody celebrates the recovery and acknowledge the vital meaning of being blessed with good appetite for food.

When the inherently given basic desires “yoku” changes into “gayoku.” Self-centered desires becomes undesirable. “Gayoku” or self-centered desires means that a person becomes obsessed with the power of desires in pursuit of his own selfish objectives without regard to others. Such an individual will cause harm not only to himself but also to many other people in association.

We may find it difficult in identifying whether the way we direct our desires are for desirable purposes or undesirable greed. Through Toritsugi-Mediation, we can make reference whether our desires are in line with the teachings or not.