



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

Konko Mission of Wahiawa, 207 Muliwai Avenue, Wahiawa, HI. 96786. Phone/Fax: (808) 621-6667, Cell: (808) 226-9594
E-mail: konko-wahiawa@hotmail.com. Also, find us on Facebook. Head minister: Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. Vol. XXX, No. 4, April 1, 2018

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: Friday, April 13, 2018

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Konko Mission of Wahiawa

Sermon: Rev. Koichi Konko (Honolulu Church)

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



By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

It has been our daily tradition to read some of the available reading materials of the faith, such as the "Konkokyo Kyoten" Scriptures and other books written in Japanese and English during the daily prayer services conducted three times a day. We have a prayer twice in the morning (6:00 am and 9:00 am) and once in the evening (7:30 pm). Currently we have been reading messages from the 4th Konko-Sama, the late **Rev. Kagamitaro Konko** (Pictured above). His messages were compiled into a book titled, "*Ikiru chikara no okurimono*" or a gift of messages that help us to live a fulfilling life. The book is composed of messages given to believers during Toritsugi-Mediation sessions, interviews, messages delivered on New Year's through radio programs and through his work of *Tanka* (Japanese Poetry) in reflection of his thoughts about the daily practice of faith. The people involved in the messages gave their consents to be published in the book. Usually, such messages would not be available to the public because of the confidential nature of Toritsugi-Mediation.

While I was reading, my attention was drawn to a particular message given to a Konko minister during

Toritsugi Divine Mediation. I would like to share the episode. The following is an English translation made by the me for your reference.

Unconditional Gratitude

The title is "No. 27: Speaking of only 40 percent of elements to gain fulfillment, while failing to extend thanks for the matters that have already been fulfilled" (page 95 to 101).

One day, a Head Minister of a local church made a visit to see Konko-Sama at the Konkokyo Headquarters Church and conveyed a message at the Toritsugi-Mediation Desk. He stated, "My eldest daughter developed rheumatism after the appendectomy. Her fever returned to normal and she was discharged from the hospital lately. In appreciation of my daughter's recovery from the illness, I made a pilgrimage to our parent church, along with my wife, daughter and her husband and our eldest son." On our way back from the pilgrimage, the car occupied by five of us stopped at the red signal. In no time at all, a big truck hit our car from behind. My wife and daughter injured their cervical vertebrae and were taken to the hospital right away. The rest of us also suffered from whiplash. My wife and daughter returned home from the hospital recently."

Konko-Sama listened to the message but didn't respond to him for a bit longer pause. Then, Konko-Sama made a short remark by saying, "お礼が遅れて願いが先になっていますなあ" that could be translated, "You have prioritized your concerns rather than extending thanks." He continued to say, "Your wishful thoughts arise from anxieties, concerns and needless worries you might hold in mind. Anxieties, concerns and needless worries are unstable conditions. Your wishful thoughts placed on the unstable foundation will always co-respond to the unstable foundation."

"The Founder stated, 'A heart that feels compassion is a heart of Kami' (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 74). But uncontrolled compassion could be harmful. If a child demands her favorite food recklessly and gets as much as she could consume, she is to suffer from intestinal disorder. Then the parents would worry in witnessing the suffering child. Both the child and the parents would suffer. The child could die from the complications."

"The message you forwarded sounds like you are only concerned for the forty percent of elements that need to be fulfilled, while showing no acknowledgement for the sixty percent of fulfillment you already have enjoyed." What you should do is to extend your thanks for the sixty

percent of blessings you already have enjoyed and ask to be blessed for the forty percent of elements that need to be fulfilled. You don't seem to be extending thanks for the sixty percent of blessings that have already been fulfilled. But instead, you seem to be asking for forty percent of elements that still needs to be fulfilled."

"What I am going to say may not be the best example. Suppose you desperately need 10,000,000 yen to deal with a situation. And you actually already have 6,000,000 yen in hand. But your only concern is only directed to get the unfulfilled 4,000,000 yen. The proper sequence of steps to get your prayers answered is to extend your thanks for the 6,000,000 yen you already have. Based on that foundation of thanks, try to be blessed with the rest of the amount you need. I am pointing out to you that you sound like you have no appreciation for the 6,000,000 yen you have, but are demanding only for the unfulfilled amount of 4,000,000 yen."

"Though you and your family have been involved in a car accident, you were able to receive medical treatments for the injuries in blessedness. And in blessedness, you could be here today."

"It is a blessing that you have an able body to cook rice today. In blessedness, you can cook rice. It is the very state of getting blessed that you could receive medical treatments. We may be distracted by wants and needs of material wealth and financial wealth. But the real blessing is our able bodies we can enjoy. When you cook rice, give thanks to Kami-Sama by extending a prayer in heart, 'In blessedness, I am going to cook rice.' When rice is cooked, extend your thanks to Kami-Sama by saying a prayer, 'Thank you for the rice.'"

"When you use your washing machine, say a prayer of thanks for your able body to be able to do laundry work, 'Let me use the washing machine in blessedness.' When the laundry work is done, say a prayer of thanks, 'In blessedness, I could finish the laundry work.'"

"You might know that the third Konko-Sama (the late Rev. Setsutane Konko) always extended his thought, 'No matter how much I try to fulfill my thoughts of thanks (to Kami-Sama for the blessings received)' I feel there could be much more of thanks to forward. I always extend my apologies for not being able to fulfill enough thanks (to Kami-Sama)."

"Each of us" is a beloved child of Kami-Sama. We are all children of Kami-Sama. I have always tried to ask myself that if my parents would feel fulfilled for today's life I have lived; if my parents would feel joy in witnessing my way of life."

"My mother suffered from excruciating conditions of rheumatoid arthritis in her hands in such a manner that her fingers became disfigured. But she could enjoy living the life of seventy-seven in blessedness. As long as you

continued to give thanks (for any blessings you would acknowledge), you would be free from any worries."

"You can make a pilgrimage to your parent church in blessedness. If you live the faith in extending thanks at all times, you are to get blessed. No matter how much thanks we may forward to Kami-Sama, there would be no limit."

"Be mindful that extending thanks is the core essential element of the Konko faith. Gratitude is the foundation of the Konko faith life. You would have no worries. In corresponding to your faith life in exercising your grateful heart, you are to enjoy blessings. If you live the faith in the opposite manner, the blessings you receive would also become opposite."

Konko-Sama Says . . .

Although people live between heaven and earth, they are unaware of Kami's blessings. Shrines, temples, and houses all stand on Kami's land. Without realizing this, people consult the Days and Directions and are disrespectful to Kami. They suffer hardships due to these offenses. Tenchi Kane no Kami has sent Ikigami Konko Daijin to provide blessings and teachings so that mankind may prosper. Kami is Kami because of man, and man is man because of Kami. Both are fulfilled through this mutual relationship (Konko Kyoso Gorikai No. 3 in Kyoten Gorikai III).

Although Kami cannot be seen, you are constantly walking within and through the midst of Kami. Even while fertilizing a field or walking along a path, you are in Tenchi Kane No Kami's hiromae. The whole world is Tenchi Kane No Kami's hiromae (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 6).

Bulletin Board

Monthly Services for April 2018

- 1 Sun -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (9 am)
- 8 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
 - Honolulu Church Grand Service &
 - 5th Year Memorial Service for the late
 - Rev. Masahiko Yoshino (11 am)
- 13 Fri -Wahiawa Church Grand Service (6:30 pm)
- 15 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
 - Waipahu Church Grand Service (11 am)
- 22 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)

May 2018

- 1 Tue -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)

Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace

The regular monthly meeting will be held on Monday, April 23, 2018 at Gedatsu Church at 1:30 p.m.

Volunteer Activity

The regular monthly visit to the Wahiawa General Hospital Long-Term Care Facility will be made on Friday, April 20, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

8th Summer Ohana Camp

We held a garage sale on Saturday, March 17, 2018. The proceed of \$774.72 was deposited to the Educational fund for the 8th Summer Ohana Camp scheduled for July 7 & 8, 2018 at Camp Erdman. Thank you for your donations of items and monetary donations for the purpose. We will also conduct a Zippy's fund-raising program from April 8 through June 3, 2018. We appreciate your help and support for the educational program initiated by the Konko Mission of Wahiawa.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

April

Gilbert Toshio Iwasa	4/9/1999
Zenji Takahashi	4/12/1966
Frances Shigeno Takahashi	4/13/2009
Yoshiro Kamitono	4/16/2000
Kiku Takahashi	4/26/1967
Robert Mendoz	4/27/2006
Richard Yoji Noguchi	4/28/2016
Shinichi 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 338,339 and 340)



No. 338: When a family member dies, the family covers the altar with a sheet of paper for forty-nine days. Though they try to avoid kami, they cannot avoid walking on His ground. They commit irreverence unknowingly.

(I Saito Sojiro 26-1 Kyoten page 314 to 315)

No taboos in the Konko faith tradition

The people in Japan, regardless of localities, have a persistent view that death is a subject of taboo and should be avoided because of the impure nature of a dead body. In America and other western countries, in consideration of public health, the corpse of the deceased may be kept at their respective place of worship for a short period of time for ceremonial purposes, but would be swiftly transferred to a crematory.

In Japan, they view that the presence of a decomposing body in front of Kami is an irreverence; thus it shall be removed immediately and Kami's place shall be kept pure and sacred. They view death as impure. Because of this prevailing concept about death, they have imposed various taboos on the family members of the deceased. They have to deal with an imposed restrictive life.

The Founder responded to the observance of taboos by stating, “When a family member dies, the family covers the altar with a sheet of paper for forty-nine days. Though they try to avoid kami, they cannot avoid walking on His ground. They commit irreverence unknowingly.”

The Founder liberated the people's mind from the taboos in such a marvelous manner. The believers should believe in Tenchi Kane No Kami, who sustains any living creatures between Heaven and Earth, and live much care-free lives.

In general, the family who lost their beloved one would respond to send out a notice of “mourning” to the relatives and friends as a courtesy reminder that they would stay socially inactive during the period of mourning. But this practice of mourning is a foreign tradition to the Konko believers and does not reflect the Konko faith practice.

Konko Daijin recorded a message in the “Oshirase-goto-oboecho” which is a record of divine messages the Founder received as follows: “On July 29, 1877 (September 6), I gave prayers early in the morning. I received the following request from Tensho Kotaijin-Sama. ‘Like Tenchi Kane No Kami-Sama, I do not speak of impurities and taboos anymore. Convey this to the people.’ Tensho Kotaijin gave this request to me, Konko Daijin” (Oshirase-goto-oboecho-14). Tensho Kotaijin is believed to be the supreme deity of all deities in Japan.

The Konko believers may not necessarily follow the general social customs, but try to live the Konko faith in confidence.

No. 339: The believers that had gathered, notices a man who for several times approached the Hiromae and then left. They asked, “Konko-Sama, what is wrong with that man? He looks as if he's coming to worship, but he doesn't.” Konko-Sama answered, “That man, with the death of his parent, thinks that it is a period of taboo. Therefore, he hesitates to come to worship. Tell him that since there are no taboos or impurities in this faith, he is free to come and worship.” *(II Ishihara Ginzo 3-1 Kyoten page 437 to 438)*

Ginzo Ishihara was born at a southern part of Okayama Prefecture. He was a farmer. He made the first visit to see the Founder in 1873. Along with farming, he engaged in the work of Toritsugi-Mediation. He was influenced by the Founder who was at his prime time as Toritsugi-Mediator in his advanced age.

The original message of the quoted message begins, “One day, the believers that had gathered at the Hiromae noticed a man about forty years old, carrying a child on his back, who for several times approached the gate and then left.” Responding to the believers’ curiosity, Konko-Sama answered, “That man, with the death of his parent, thinks that it is a period of taboo. Therefore, he hesitates to come to worship. Tell him that since there are no taboos or impurities in this faith, he is free to come and worship.” It seemed that the Founder extended his thoughts and prayers for this believer for a long period of time.

The sorrow we experience in encountering the loss of the beloved parents would never change no matter how old we become. When we encounter such a sorrowful experience, we wish to be comforted from the condition. The imposition of taboos of impurities would aggravate the situation even more.

Even today on New Year’s Day, one of the church believers made a call and inquired, “Would it be all right for me to make a visit to church despite the fact we had lost one of our family members last year?”

It was my prayer that she would be set free from the social norms of taboos pertaining to death in the family and believe in Tenchi Kane No Kami and live the Konko faith in confidence.

No. 340: A person is never able to decide when to be born and when to die. It is only while he is alive that he speaks of such things. Any place, day, or direction convenient for people is a good place, day, or direction. Kami doesn’t use the Days and Directions to trouble people.

(I Ogihara Sugi 25 Kyoten page 273)

One of the distinctive characters of the Konko faith tradition is we do not care much about the traditional observance of the Days and Directions. In the original message quoted, there is another line of message that reads, “Regardless of how wise or virtuous people are, they are never able to decide when to be born and when to die.”

In real life, regardless of the due date for birth, both the mother-to-be and the baby inside the womb have little control for the moment of birth. The same is also true for passing. When a person reached the ending stage of life have little control to choose “Taian” or a lucky day, or avoid “Sanrinbo” or unlucky day for the passing.

But it is also true that we have been bothered by the tradition of the Days and Directions while we live in one way or another. It would be an apparent show of self-centeredness, lack of rationale and weakness.

It was an absolute social norm to follow the rules of the Days and Directions during the transitional period of Edo era when the Founder lived. In those circumstances, the Founder believed in Tenchi Kane No Kami, the Divine Parent of the Universe who blesses the entire Universe. He firmly stated, “An auspicious day is considered a day that has no clouds in the sky, is warm, and suits your convenience” (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 181-3). In those days, if a person behaved against the communal norm, he or she would be disowned from the village community—also known as the state of “*Murahachibu*.” Being a *murahachibu* prevented the family members from participating in any other community functions other than marriage and funeral. We, believers who live in today’s world shall also develop the same spirituality exhibited by the Founder and be proud of our engagement in the practice of the faith.

The Founder Konko-Sama not only rebelled against the tradition of the Days and Directions, but also identified the true nature of Tenchi Kane no Kami whose only concern is to help people. He firmly stated that Tenchi Kane No Kami is not an evil deity who causes troubles to people. There would be no broader religious perspective exhibited by the Founder.

There is some inclination in the faith community that values the tradition of “*Jitsui teinei*” or thorough exercise of thoughtfulness in pursuit of faith life, adherence to the important service days, and displaying little flexibility to change the days of observing church services on holidays.

In conclusion, I would say that we need to live the Konko faith in extending our true belief in Tenchi Kane No Kami and live a fulfilling life.