



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

Konko Mission of Wahiawa, 207 Muliwai Avenue, Wahiawa, HI. 96786. Phone/Fax: (808) 621-6667, Cell: (808) 294-6331
E-mail: konko-wahiawa@hotmail.com. Also, find us on Facebook. Head minister: Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. Vol. XXVII, No. 8, August 1, 2015

A thought over “大願の氏子” or “Beloved child of Kami with a prayer”

By Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

On Friday, July 31, my wife, Reiko, daughter, Edna and I attended the KMH ministers' meeting held at the Konko Mission of Honolulu from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Reiko also attended the second day meeting held on Saturday, August 1 for faith enrichment primarily aimed for lay believers. The guest speaker was the Rev. Junichi Watanabe, Head minister of Habikino Church in Osaka, Japan. He once worked at the Konkokyo Research Institute at Konkokyo Headquarters for 20 years. I would like to introduce an English translation of the script of the presentation made by the Rev. Junichi Watanabe for your reference.

The church celebrated its 42nd anniversary this year. It is a relatively new church in Osaka where many older churches have been flourishing. Both of his parents lived as *shugyosei* (faith apprentices) at the Konko Church of Izu in Osaka. When the Rev. Junichi Watanabe reached 6th grader, we left the Izu Church and got engaged in a missionary work at Habikino from scratch. Initially, my parents began their missionary work at a so-called “bunka-jutaku” or city apartment housing complex. The building was two-storied. We lived on the first floor which had 2 rooms—A six-matted room and one four- and a half matted room. The living quarters were used for missionary work. The missionary work was not officially recognized in the beginning. They named the temporary missionary facility as “Konkokyo Minami Osaka Hoosan Kai.” Then the missionary facility was recognized as “Yobi Fukyo Sho” or a preliminary missionary station which was a formal stage as a Konko church. It was when I was a freshman in high school, a new church building was established for missionary work. My father, the founding minister of the church passed away nine years ago. And I took over the responsibility of the church operation thereafter.

“Taigan no ujiko”

I would like to talk about the meaning of “Taigan no ujiko” used by the Founder Konko Daijin. In “Oshirase goto oboecho” at the last page, a message is written as follows: “For the sake of all people and to save those who give Me requests, I shall sacrifice you. This is for the eternal dignity of Konko Daijin’s divine virtue” (Oshirasegoto Oboecho 15-2).

The original Japanese expression of “Taigan no ujiko” does not referred to those ministers, assistant to the ministers and believers who would be motivated to spread the teachings of the Konko faith, or save others which literally means a beloved child of Kami who has a big wish to be fulfilled, but it simply

referred to any lay people, referred to as beloved Kami’s children, who have their own personal issues to get resolved and come to seek help for the “Ohiromae” where the Founder served as Toritsugi-Mediator. In the prayer notebook kept by the Founder, each individual’s extended personal issues were described as “taigan.” For those people, their “taigan” means relief from pains in eyes, legs and shoulders, illnesses, marriage issues, business concerns and so forth. Those issues arise naturally as people live. Originally, these concerns and issues are human-oriented, but as these concerns are mediated and conveyed to Tenchi Kane No Kami, their extended concerns become Tenchi Kane No Kami’s concerns. Those who made a visit to see the Founder were seeking to get concerns fulfilled and nothing more. Many of those who got blessed through the work of the Founder didn’t come back again to see the Founder. The Founder referred to visitors whose only concern is to get blessed as “Taigan no ujiko.”

And the term “jinmin” expressed in the quoted message referred to the people in the whole world who would have no connection to the faith practice and do not come to attend “Kami’s Hiromae.”

The Founder sacrificed himself in place of those Kami’s beloved children who extend their prayers for salvation and those people who would never connect to the Konko faith.

Then, what about believers who follow the faith tradition? What thoughts and prayers should we have in the practice of faith? From this stage on, it will be a world only those who have faith in Kami can appreciate.

The difference between people who believe in Kami and people referred to as “Taigan no ujiko” whose only concern is personal fulfilment is the prayer those believers have in pursuit of the faith. Believers should develop a conviction that they want to get fulfilled in enjoying family prosperity from generation to generation based on the Konko faith tradition. If they fail to have this conviction in pursuit of faith, they would become a “Taigan no ujiko.” Those believers should have visions for their aim in pursuit of faith and work hard in fulfilment of the goal. This conviction is an important element for the enjoyment of family prosperity from generation to generation.

As for the believers, to get fulfilled in “taigan” means to appreciate the extended prayer of the Founder who wished to help people in the whole world and be of service in actualization of the prayer.

For me, the new interpretation of the meaning of “大願” which is pronounced either “taigan” or “daigan” in Japanese, used by the Founder helped me to understand how the Founder responded to the people’s requests and the nature of prayers we extended by calling out the name of Ikigami Konko Daijin and Tenchi Kane No Kami.

The distinctive perception of “大願” or “taigan” held by the Founder is absolutely different from the common understanding of the term “大願” which refers to “realization of a great ambition” or “actualization of a great ambition.” But the Founder Konko Daijin used it in a different manner. In accordance with the presentation made by the Rev. Watanabe, the Founder used the expression of “大願” or “taigan” for any wishes and prayers forwarded to him by common people.

The speaker stated, “In the prayer notebook kept by the Founder, each individual’s extended personal issues were described as ‘taigan.’ ‘Taigan’ means relief from pains in eyes, legs and shoulders, illnesses, marriage matters, business concerns and so forth. Those issues arise naturally as people live. Originally, these concerns and issues are human-oriented, but these concerns pass through the Toritsugi-Mediation and conveyed to Tenchi Kane No Kami, their extended concerns become Tenchi Kane No Kami’s concerns. Those who made a visit to see the Founder were seeking to get concerns fulfilled and nothing more. Many of those who got blessed through the work of the Founder didn’t come back again to see the Founder. The Founder referred to even those visitors whose only concern is get blessed as ‘Taigan no ujiko.’”

In my understanding, the concept of “Taigan no ujiko” is originated to the Toritsugi-Mediation naturally developed through the presence of the Founder Konko Daijin. In the “Rikkyo Shinden” or the “Divine Call for the Founder and His Family” in which Kami made a request to the Founder to give up farming and dedicate for the divine task of Toritsugi-Mediation for the sake of people in suffering. The divine message reads, “With the completion of this sacred staff, I will end your farming career. Please understand. When you are out farming, the person at home has to go out and call you whenever someone comes to give a request. And after you relay the request, you have to go back out again. You have to keep going in and out of the field. This gives you little time for farming, and the worshipper must also wait for you. Both you and the worshipper are being inconvenienced” (Oboecho 9-3-2). From the very initial stage of his engagement in his service as Toritsugi-Mediator, he always responded to each and every individual who came to seek his help with the heart of sincerity and help. He didn’t try to screen who should be accepted for a meeting. Every individual who made a visit for help seemed to be greeted with respect. All the visitors who made efforts to seek help from the Founder were perceived as “大願の氏子” or “Beloved child of Kami with a prayer.” And this concept can be easily understood if we extend our thoughts for both the visitor and the Founder.

When we make a visit to church, we may have to change into nicer clothes, use transportation, use our time and make offerings or a token of appreciation to be given and any other elements would be put into consideration. Some people may come from afar, may spend days in just trying to seek help from the Founder. At the same time, the family members had to respond to a visitor by making a trip to inform the Founder about the visitor. The Founder had to give up his engagement in his farm work temporarily for maybe a couple of hours. On those days, he had to travel on foot. Upon returning from the farm field, the Founder had to change into some formal dress

and greeted the visitor. He had listened to the visitor and responded to him or her and extended prayers for them. Even meeting with one visitor alone would be hectic while he was out in the field. What if there would be several visitors a day, it would disrupt his main occupation as a farmer. In corresponding to the developing circumstance, Kami asked the Founder to give up his farming and devote himself for the task of helping visitors. Because of this initial stage of handling of visitors by the Founder, we can understand why the Founder referred to any visitors with the expression of “大願の氏子” or “Beloved child of Kami with a prayer.” This fundamental receptiveness for visitors for help demonstrated by the Founder Konko Daijin has been preserved throughout his entire life and also by the successive Principal Toritsugi-Mediator for generations. It is said that it is quite unique that the Head of the religious organization would serve actively at the designated place called the Toritsugi-Mediation Desk, and any visitors can meet him without any appointment or reservations made in advance. In the Konkokyo faith community, we have a common expression of “Ujiko wa Kami ga hikiyoseru” or “people in need of help would be drawn to church by Kami.”

The presentation by the Rev. Watanabe also reminded me the nature of prayers being forwarded by “大願の氏子” or “Beloved child of Kami with a prayer” to Ikigami Konko Daijin and Tenchi Kane No Kami. Even those people who have never made a visit to Konko Church and met the Founder, their “大願” or “personal prayers” would be heralded by Kami by pronouncing the name of Ikigami Konko Daijin and Tenchi Kane No Kami.

Here is an interesting episode that demonstrates the valid meaning of the practice. The Rev. Matsuhei Katsura stated,

“When I lived in Yanai-cho, Yamaguchi Prefecture, I heard about Konko Daijin from a door-to-door salesman named Aketa Kakutaro. My mother had already been following the teachings of the Faith for some time. She always urged me to practice faith. I once heard Kakutaro conveying one of Konko-Sama’s teachings. ‘If young people practice faith, their accumulated offenses and those of their families will be cleared away by the age of forty.’ I was moved.

To inquire about this, I went and bowed before the altar of Konpira-Sama, a kami I had been revering. As my mind slowly quieted, I rubbed my crystal rosary beads between my clasped hands and said, ‘If the Konko Daijin which Aketa Kakutaro believes in is a true kami, show me an even number ten times out of ten. If an odd number comes up even once, I will take him to be a phony kami and forget about him from today.’ When I opened my hands, the number of beads was even. And out of the ten times, it was an even number each time. I tried it three more times, and it was an even number each time.

I felt apologetic and thought, ‘Please forgive my irreverence of suspecting Kami-Sama to be a phony kami. Konko-Sama has sent Aketa Kakutaro to save my family.’ I vowed, ‘From this day on, I will practice faith firmly and wholeheartedly.’ From then on, I yearned to see the Ikigami-Sama of Bitchu Province, and always thought of Konko-Sama’s Hiromae.

In the spring of 1883, I went to the Hiromae for the elderly lady owner of a flower shop in Shinyashiki. Before leaving for the Hiromae, I gave thanks. 'Konko-Sama, thank you for letting me realize my long wish to meet you.' I then went to the Hiromae. Konko-Sama glanced at me while kindly giving teachings to more than ten worshippers. Being my first time and not knowing what to do, I sat unobtrusively in the back and just stared at Konko-Sama. After he finished giving a teaching, he said, 'To the person from Suo province, I'm glad to see that you have come to worship from afar.'

I was deeply impressed by Konko-Sama's divine virtue. While I was in awe, Konko-Sama quietly went before the altar and clapped his hands in prayer. In a prompt revelation, 'Though you think that water is bad, don't think so. Think of water as medicine. Then you won't have a stomach illness.'

He solemnly continued, 'Don't say that water is the cause of your stomach illness. Without water, you cannot live even for a day. What is the earth made from? It's made from water. Don't they say that single ear of rice needs a liter of water to grow? Be aware of the benefit of water.'

I felt so much gratitude that my body trembled while I bowed. When Konko-Sama returned to his kekkai seat, he turned to me with smiling eyes and kindly told me, 'Person from Suo, your doubts of I being a phony kami have been dispelled.' This is good. I was so much in awe, and felt ashamed by Konko-Sama's divine virtue, which could span across the nation, that I felt like crawling into a hole"(Gorikai II Katsura Matsuhei 1).

There are many other similar episodes like this. When a person calls out the name of the Founder Ikigami Konko Daijin or the divine name of Tenchi Kane No Kami, their prayers would reach Tenchi Kane No Kami. "大願の氏子" or "Beloved child of Kami with a prayer" is an individual who directs his or her heart toward Kami and make a visit to see the Founder. We can be "大願の氏子" or "Beloved child of Kami with a prayer" when we make a visit to church or make a pilgrimage to see Konko-Sama at Headquarters Church.



Konko-Sama Says . . .

Konko-Sama said, "People are endowed with the spirit of Tenchi No Kami-Sama. Nittenshi-Sama blesses our bodies with muscles and bones. Gattenshi-Sama blesses our mouths with moisture, enabling us to speak. However, few have a heart that Tenchi No Kami-Sama can accept.

Those whose hearts can be accepted by Tenchi No Kami-Sama will be blessed with good health, wealth, and wisdom for three generations, resulting in a strong family lineage. This is having your heart accepted by Tenchi No Kami-Sama. Unfortunately, people are unaware of this. Thus Kami-Sama feels pity for them.

Having great wealth requires the wisdom that must go with it. Those whose hearts are not accepted by Tenchi No

Kami-Sama may have the wealth, but not the wisdom. Thus, they will inevitably meet adversity.

Others who have the wealth as well as the wisdom, will get sick even if they do not want to. They won't be able to go out and work in the village.

Those who have wisdom and good health will lose their wealth. If they don't lose their wealth, their main successors will die, leaving not inheritors.

And since those with wisdom and a good family lineage don't have money, they won't be asked to fill responsible positions.

These are all evidence of hearts which are not accepted by Tenchi No Kami-Sama. Since these people are not aware of Tenchi No Kami's blessings, they are always lacking one thing or another. If you practice faith, understand Kami's blessings and live a peaceful and stable life, you will have descendants, gain wealth, and be rest assured. Look forward to the future. First you will receive divine blessings from year to year, then from decade to decade, and finally from generation to generation.

Even if a fruit tree blossoms, we don't know if it will bear fruit or not. If it does bear fruit, the fruit will gradually get bigger. Similarly, with time, the divine blessings you receive will get bigger.

Kami-Sama exists throughout Tenchi, even in mountains, valleys, and river bottoms. So practice faith." (II Sato Mitsujiro 13)

Bulletin Board

Monthly Services for August 2015

- 1 Sat -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 2 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-1st Women's Group Gathering at Waipahu Church (9:30 am to 12:30 pm)
- 9 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
- 16 Sun -Monthly Service, Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
- 23 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9:00 am) &
-Honolulu Church Late Rev. Masayuki Kodama's 42nd Memorial Service (9 am)
- 30 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

September 2015

- 1 Tue -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 6 Sun -Monthly Service, Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)

Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace

The next monthly meeting will be held on Monday, August 10, 2015 at the Gedatsu Church at 1:30 p.m.

Konko Missions on Oahu Volunteer Activity

Three local churches on Oahu will coordinate a volunteer activity at the Kuakini Hospital Hale Pulama Mau Auditorium on Sunday, August 9 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

KMH Board of Trustees Meeting

The regular KMH Board of Trustees Meeting will be held on Saturday, August 15, at 10:30 a.m. at the Konko Mission of Honolulu.

Monthly Volunteer Activity

The regular monthly visit to the Long-Term Care Facility at the Wahiawa General Hospital for volunteer activity will be made on Friday, August 21, 2015 at 10:00 a.m.

Church Board Meeting

The Konko Mission of Wahiawa Board Member Meeting will be held on Sunday, August 30, following the Sunday Service at 9:00 a.m.

Kakaako Ehimemaru Memorial Clean up

The Ehime Kenjinkai members will conduct a regular care for the Mikan trees at the Kaka'ako Ehimemaru Memorial on Saturday, August 29 at 9:00 a.m.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

August

Masaru Nakano	8/5/2004
Sunao Hayashida	8/8/1958
Masataka Yano	8/13/2012
Jinpei Hayashida	8/13/1939
Helen Y. Eguchi	8/14/1946
Rev. Masayuki Kodama	8/24/1973
Shizue Eguchi	8/19/2012
Kima Yamashita	8/?/1979

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 122, 123 and 124)

No. 122

Many place their trust in Kami, but Kami places trust in only a few. (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 30 Kyoten page 783)

Trusted by Kami

The quoted message, “Many believe in Kami. But Kami believes in only a few” (I Shimamura Hachitaro), was originally recorded by the Rev. Hachitaro Shimamura, who became inspired

by the message given by the Founder. He tried to emulate the Founder who gained trust of Kami.

Those who get engaged in practice of faith are inclined to perceive that they believe in Kami. But, Kami can hardly identify those believers who can be trustworthy. When we get engaged in pursuit of faith, we would like to have a conviction to become believers who would be trusted by Kami. The first step in achieving that aim is gain trust of your local ministers.

The Founding minister of Konko Church of Hita in Oita, the Rev. Yasuji Horio had an episode. When he was young, he tried to attend the annual “Gokoku Houjo Kigan Sai” or the annual prayer service for abundant harvest held at the Konko Church of Amagi where he got religious training. On the day of the scheduled service, the train he was on board developed a trouble and kept at a station on the way. He responded to the situation that he got off the train and held the luggage on his back and raced to the church on foot. The traveling distance was approximately ten kilometers, and in about one hour and a half, he managed to get to church. But the service was already in progress. The officiating minister in charge noticed the appearance of the Rev. Horio while they were reciting the prayer called “Ooharai.” The season was July, and the whole body of the Rev. Horio was soaked wet with sweat.

The director of the service “Tenrei” noticed the presence of the Rev. Horio and responded to approach him while the service was in progress. He instructed the Rev. Horio to change into the ceremonial robe as soon as possible and serve at the seat reserved for him. The Rev. Matsutarō Yasutake, Head Minister of the church instructed to other officiating ministers, “The Rev. Horio would come to attend the service by all means. He has never canceled his duties for services in the past. When he would encounter any irregularities that would prevent him to come to church, he always informed about the circumstance by telegraph. Make sure to reserve a seat for him for the service.” The Rev. Horio was overwhelmed with thoughts of gratefulness for the extended trust by the minister. He immediately changed into the ceremonial robe and attended the service. During the service, he could not hold back tears in deep gratefulness and thought, “I feel so grateful in acknowledging the deep trust extended to me from the Rev. Matsutarō Yasutake.”

No. 123

People use Kami, while not knowing how to serve Kami. (I Shimamura Hachitaro 5 Kyoten page 327)

Serving Kami

This message is also recorded by the Rev. Hachitaro Shimamura. He was once a samurai. It would be his learned ability that he could identify vital elements while listening to a long story shared by the Founder. His writing is short, but powerful.

After the World War II, I experienced spiritual impasse in life and lived life aimlessly for a while. In those days, I had an opportunity to get religious training under the guidance of the Rev. Yasuji Horio, Head Minister of Konko Church of Hita in

Ooita. After attending the annual “Fukyou Kourousha Hootoku Sai” or the annual service dedicated in acknowledgement of believers who made great contribution for the expansion of the Konko faith observed at Headquarters Church at Konko Town in December, I left for the Konko Church of Hita.

At that occasion, in place of my father, Head Minister of Konko Church of Nihonbashi in Tokyo, I made a courtesy visit to make a greeting to the residence of Konko-Sama. While I was standing at the inner entrance, the wife of the 3rd Konko-Sama, the Rev. Setsutane Konko, responded to my greeting. She asked me, “When do you return to Tokyo?” I responded that I was heading to get a religious training at the Konko Church of Hita. Mrs. Konko expressed her happiness and encouragement for my trip. I responded to her by saying, “I don’t think my physical condition is strong enough. I have some concerns how much I would be able to get from the training.” Mrs. Konko reflectively changed her posture in a serious manner and stated, “Kami uses those physically weak accordingly in their given conditions. You would have no worries. I also was physically weak. When I soak my body in the bathtub, I could only lower my body up to my chest. But I believed in Kami and asked His help sincerely, I learned to appreciate that even a person with some physical restrictions like me would be able to serve Kami.”

As Mrs. Konko stated, through our prayers and reliance on Kami, we would be of service to Kami regardless of our limited physical strength or any other elements of restrictions.

D. Faith and Morals

No. 124

People have often wondered why a man who is honest, doesn’t do anything bad to others and is like a kami or Buddha, is often afflicted with many misfortunes. This is because he has somehow shown irreverence to kami. No matter how honest and good he is, he is apt to commit irreverence to kami, if he does not practice faith. There is a difference between having a good personality and showing reverence to Kami. If you don’t practice faith, no matter how good a person you may be, you won’t receive divine blessings. (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 105-1, 2 Kyoten page 849)

Being a good person does not necessarily agree with the nature of practicing faith.

The quoted message sounds like the Founder was in deep contemplation in looking back at his own life.

When the Founder was adopted to the family in Otani, the household ranked at the lower social and economic standing in the village community. But the family gained much recognition and respect from other villagers through his endeavor for success. He gained much larger land properties through his hard work. He also followed the religious traditions in the village faithfully. Village Head also placed much trust on the Founder in such manners that he was entrusted to fulfill the duties of “gin-bikyaku” (a messenger for transportation of the taxed currencies of the village to the landlord) and “Ideban” (a

watch for dam water distribution to rice paddies) and so forth. In this regard, the Founder could have gained much trust from the villagers who would refer to him as “He is an honest person who would never commit wrongs and is like a kami or buddha.”

But the Founder lost children one after another, and also lost two of the treasured household oxen and many other difficult encounters in life. The Founder stated, “In every case, I had a doctor give treatment, and I gave fervent requests and prayers to various kamis and did all I could. Even after I prayed to the kamis and buddhas, the victims were not saved. I stood by helpless. I lived with this constant frustration and futility” (Konko Daijin Oboegaki 6-5). Finally, the Founder became succumbed to a life-endangering illness. Under the critical condition, the Founder found out that no matter how much he would have exercised scrupulous mindfulness in identifying some wrongs and irreverence against Kami, he would have committed some offenses against Kami. In corresponding to the inner thought held by the Founder, Tenchi Kane No Kami revealed His true nature to the Founder.

At an early stage of the religious life of the Founder was focused in exercising “Jitsui Teinei” or exercising scrupulous mindfulness in doing anything at all. But much of his attention was placed on getting engaged in believing as many deities as possible, which could be described as “quantity-oriented” and moral-oriented engagement in pursuit of faith. The Founder made a drastic change in pursuit of faith through thorough examination of any possible irreverence and offenses he could have committed unknowingly and surrendered himself before Kami unconditionally at the moment of critical stage of illness. This transformation in pursuit of faith can be described as “quality-oriented.” He attained a transformation from a moral-oriented to a pure-religious engagement in his pursuit of faith. At this stage, the Founder actualized fulfillment in his religious endeavor.

Based on his own experiences, the Founder showed us that no matter how consciously exercise scrupulous sincerity in pursuit of faith, as long as the believer can appreciate truth of divine heart, there would be no way of achieving fulfillment of salvation.