



Thank you, 5th Konko-Sama



*By Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister*

I have just returned to Hawaii after attending the funeral functions for the late Rev. Heiki Konko (5th Konko Sama), who passed away on July 21, Japan time.

He retired as Head of the Konkokyo Religious Organization and had been cared for in a facility due to his physical condition in his later years. He was 89 years old. On July 21, a somber voice of Rev. Koichi Konko informed me that the Rev. Heiki Konko passed away at the very dawn of the day, at 12:46 a.m.

When I heard the news, both, my wife and I immediately went to the Hiromae altar and extended a prayer of appreciation for his 89 years of life and dedicated service for the Konkokyo community. I eagerly wanted to attend the funeral service, but I slightly

hesitated since I had just come home from my oldest brother's funeral service earlier in July. This would mean that I would go to Japan twice in one month. However, since my family members encouraged me to go to Japan again, I immediately booked a flight. That was the most affordable flight when I searched for it. After finalizing the booking, I looked at the details of the flight. My return trip was not a direct flight back. I had to fly to San Francisco from Japan and then back to Hawaii. I had to spend some time at the airport, but I felt that as long as I could go to Japan, I didn't mind if I had to make a layover to San Francisco.

My daughter, Edna asked me about my itinerary. She immediately responded by saying, "Are you out of your mind!? Why do you have to go to San Francisco for your return?" She found a much more affordable direct flight from Honolulu to Japan and back. I was thankfully able to cancel the initial booking and accept the new booking made by Edna.

After booking the flight, Koichi-sensei gave me a call to say that this travel could be considered an official business trip of Konko Missions in Hawaii and that the travel expenses would be reimbursed. I am grateful for the consideration of Rev. Koichi Konko, who is the Director of KMH. That was an episode of my trip to Japan this time. I met Rev. Michiyoshi Yasutake (Head Minister of Amagi Church) at Gohonbu. He was surprised by my presence since he knew I was in Japan to attend my

brother's funeral earlier in July. He asked me, "Have you been staying in Japan till this day after attending the funeral service for your brother earlier this month?"

It was unprecedented that the active Spiritual Head called "Kyōshu" of the organization, Konko-Sama, retired from the position after serving for thirty years while still in active stage. His son, the Rev. Hiromichi Konko, took over the position on March 27, 2021. He might have had fathomless deep considerations for his decision which we would not be able to perceive. To be honest, unlike his predecessor, the 4th Konko-Sama, the late Rev. Kagamitaro Konko, the Rev. Heiki Konko was a man of few words. That could be attributed to his deep appreciation and admiration of his father, the 4th Konko-Sama, who clearly stated the core essential message of the Konko faith. I've been listening to his recorded message almost every day in the last decades. Maybe Rev. Heiki Konko didn't have to articulate that much in respect of his predecessor.

The 5th Konko Sama made an unprecedented journey to Hawaii and visited each local church. We never imagined that the active Konko-Sama would ever visit each church in Hawaii. It is equivalent to the Pope visiting our church. We were told not to welcome his visitation in an extravagant manner. We held a welcome gathering at our church. As he arrived at our church in Wahiawa, I prepared a Tamagushi offering made of banyan tree stem. Konko-Sama accepted it and forwarded it to the altar. Later, I placed it into a pot of soil so that the branch would take root. It grew well and we used the branch for our church services in remembrance of Konko-

Sama's visitation. I still vividly remember he enjoyed our hospitality, and in return, he sang his favorite song, "Edelweiss," in English.

I have treasured his visitation to Hawaii as a planting of his prayer for the mission of saving people in the soil of Hawaii. Thank you, Konko-Sama.

Voice of the Universe...

1. There are people between Heaven and Earth. Heaven is father and Earth is mother. Humans, plants, and other living things live on Earth through the blessings they receive from Heaven.

I Ishihara Ginzo 1

2. Heaven and Earth continue to live. Because Heaven and Earth are alive, all people are able to live.

III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 104

Bulletin Board

August 2024

1 Thr -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)

4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Rotary Hanashikai ZOOM (10:30 am)

7 Wed-Hilo Church Monthly Service (11 am)
Yano Sensei will officiate.

11 Sun-Monthly Svc for Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)

18 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

25 Sun -Monthly Memorial Svc (9 am)

September 2024

1 Sun -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami (9 am)

● Monthly Volunteer Activity at St. Francis will be on Fri, August 2 @ 10:30 am.

● KMH Kyōten Study Group via Zoom Voice of the Universe Join us: August 14 and 28 (Wed. 5 pm-6 pm) ZOOM.

● KMH Board Meeting, Saturday, August 3 at 10:30 am, Honolulu Church, ZOOM.

● KMH CEOC Mtg ZOOM on Fri, August 9 (3 pm).

In Remembrance of the people who have passed away in the month of August

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| Jinpei Hayashida | 8/13/1939 |
| Sunao Hayashida | 8/8/1958 |
| Helen Y. Eguchi | 8/14/1946 |
| Masaru Nakano | 8/5/2004 |
| Rev. Masayuki Kodama | 8/24/1973 |
| Masataka Yano | 8/14/2012 |
| Shizue Eguchi | 8/19/2012 |
| Kima Yamashita | 8/1979 |
| Hidehiko Makiguchi | 8/23/2022 |
| Sally Shigeiko Nakano | 8/20/2022 |
| Alice Shintaku | 8/8/2012 |

The Life of the Founder 金光教祖の生涯 瀬戸三喜雄 金光教学研究所 紀要別冊教学叢書 2

The following is an English translation of a book titled "Konkō Kyōso no Shougai" or "The Life of the Founder Konkō Daijin," authored by Rev. Mikio Seto and published by the Konkokyo Theological Research Center in 1980. Many biographies about the life of Founder Konkō Daijin exist, and I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. The English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (Continued from the previous issue)Page 147-149

It would be necessary to be mindful of one thing before understanding the Divine Revelation. It should be noted that the Divine Revelation, like many other revelations, was not recorded in the manner of taking a daily record of events chronologically. Namely, it could be assumed that Bunji seemed to compose the revelation in reference to his memoirs, memories, and short notes taken after Bunji reached the age of 61 in the year 1874. In relating to the facts in the Divine Revelation in 1859, it could be assumed that Bunji's religious perspectives developed from 1859 to 1874 affected the writing; also, it could

be assumed that Kami's revelation and Bunji's thoughts got assimilated and expressed in the form of the Divine Revelation. It should also be noted that the revelation was not revealed in one instance but was formulated in the form of the Divine Revelation through an exchange of dialogues between Kami and Bunji.

But we should also be mindful that Bunji fully appreciated the Divine Revelation without any doubts. When all of those elements were put into consideration, it could be demanded of us to understand the Divine Revelation in such a manner as to perceive the message as a whole, not to examine each word meticulously.

Many Difficult Encounters

Bunji understood that Kami demanded him to be a savior from an ordinary farmer. He was aware of the grave nature of Kami's request. In the past, he responded to those people who came to visit for salvation and prayed to Kami for their salvation. But he responded to those people hoping they would get some help and to keep going in their lives. That was the extent of his response to those people's needs. He did not think of any other purposes. But this time, Kami demanded him to serve at the designated place where he would dedicate himself to saving others. There is a great difference between the act of extending prayers for others who would eventually be saved because of his prayer, and the position through which Bunji dedicated solely for the purpose of fulfilling the mission of saving others by giving up any earthly elements. Bunji had to align all elements in his life to accept the demand of Kami.

In addition, Bunji would be able to retire as a farmer and give the major household responsibilities to Asakichi. Bunji held some grave concerns about whether Asakichi and his wife alone would be able to sustain the operation of the farming. It was apparent it would be impossible for them to continue the operation of the farming without Bunji.

Bunji anticipated some grave family conflicts would arise. There is an interesting episode related by Kiichiro Sayanagi. In this year, or the previous year, Bunji had to serve Hiromae intently, and as a result, he could not help with the farming business and failed to fertilize the field adequately. The rice plants and barley plants grew short. In these circumstances, Bunji had to deal with his wife, who raised the issue of divorce many times. But as the harvest season arrived, the yield of crops was average. His wife accepted the situation and stopped talking about divorce. It was also assumed they barely managed to avoid divorce only because they had many children. The issues of family instability were constantly present. It was believed that the family constantly faced the unexpected collapse of the household.

It really was a grave issue for farmers to give up farming and neglect their duties in the community. The village social system of "Gonin-gumi," a unit of five families, and the government of the village would have to deal with the farmer who rebelled against their community rules.

What would be the eventualities of those concerning issues for Bunji, who was going to accept the Divine Request? In responding to the situation, Kami

showed His thoughts in such manners as, "Regard this event as your death," and "Your wife should consider herself as a widow and take the children with her to do the farm work." Kami not only demanded Bunji but also involved His demand to other family members as well.

Giving up the occupation of farming could surely be a great concern. But at the age of 42, Bunji's life was spared through Kami's intervention. Based on that fact, Kami tried to persuade Bunji to follow the request. Kami's request was so extraordinary that it could be accepted by an individual who would not mind if he gave up his own life in fulfillment of the divine request. Kami put Bunji to the limit of the boundary where he would not be able to escape. Kami's request was not an order. Kami's conviction that Bunji would become a savior was solid. Kami could not give up on Bunji. That was the essential nature of Kami's request for Bunji.

(to be continued)