



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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False Ballistic Missile Warning



*By Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister*

On January 13, 2018, at around 8:08 a.m. when I opened the refrigerator in the kitchen, a mug of freshly brewed coffee dropped to the floor and I was cleaning up the spillage. Miraculously, the mug didn't crack. My second son, Rodney and his wife, Fong were visiting from San Francisco and my wife, Reiko and daughter, Edna happened to be off island, attending a Women's Missionary Society Seminar in Portland, Oregon. Rodney got out of the room and shouted out that North Korea has launched a nuclear missile against Hawaii, while viewing an emergency notification on his smart phone. At first I could not believe the news. But the radio and the TV announcements said, "Ballistic Missile threat inbound to Hawaii. Seek immediate shelter. This is not a drill." The alert was sounded at 8:07 according to the newspaper. Anyway, after cleaning up the floor, I raced to the worship hall and extended a prayer about the possible nuclear attack. While I was reciting Tenchi Kakitsuke and relayed the message to Kami-Sama I felt something was wrong. The Japanese radio station announced the message saying this was not a drill. The TV was airing a game of football. A captioned message at the bottom of the screen scrolled the threat of a ballistic missile attack. If it was a real attack, I was expecting a more appropriate warning from the media. The marquee of bold lettering told us to, "Seek immediate shelter," but we were not informed of where we should go for protection from the possible attack. I looked around the street, there seemed to be little traffic on the road. We moved to the basement of the church, as we deemed it was the safest immediate location to hide in the event of a nuclear blast. Even if the upper parts of the house were to be blown off, I thought that at least the basement will still be intact.

Eventually, Rodney updated me that the ballistic missile threat was sent out in error. "There is no missile threat or danger to the State of Hawaii. Repeat. False alarm." The

announcement was made at 8:45 a.m. They said it took about 38 minutes from the initial warning. In a real event, a missile could reach Hawaii in about 15 to 20 minutes. After I learned the threat was false, I returned to the Hiromae worship hall and extended a prayer of appreciation that we could continue to live. If it were real, we could be dead. The victims in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings had no clue what hit them, 72 years ago. It was an ordinary day, just like January 13th was an ordinary day.

They said human errors have contributed to the false alarm. But it could be a well-planned realistic drill.

Although the name of North Korea was not mentioned in the alert message, an attack could be real. Any devastating event could develop in normal everyday life. Like the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941 and the World trade Center attacks in New York on 9/11.

In my understanding, if any one of the countries that has nuclear warheads are ready to fire a missile, there should be some preemptive procedures to deal with the threat since this would be a national and worldwide security issue, not just the issue of the state of Hawaii. I assumed the U.S. Military is well equipped to deal with a real missile attack. Before the missile would reach to Hawaii, the rogue country that fired a missile would be devastated and the chain reactions would cause a global nuclear war. The thought is just insane, but the risk is always there. It is said that there could be more than enough nuclear warheads around the world to annihilate the human population many times over.

In accordance with the homepage of ICAN, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the opening paragraph reads, "Nine countries together possess around 15,000 nuclear weapons. The United States and Russia maintain roughly 1,800 of their nuclear weapons on high-alert status – ready to be launched within minutes of a warning. Most are many times more powerful than the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima. A single nuclear warhead, if detonated on a large city, could kill millions of people, with the deadly effects of the radiation persisting for decades." The threat of nuclear war is real. We live in such a chaotic world. Everybody knows the devastation of nuclear war but pretend or convince themselves it would never happen. History proves that humans have made grave mistakes.

Ordinary people cannot prepare for a possible nuclear war. The wealthy can afford underground nuclear shelters, built in old missile silos or have one dug in their own back yard. We were absolutely helpless in the possible reality of nuclear devastations.

I have kept writing my daily messages of prayer to Kami-Sama in the prayer notebook called “Gokinencho.” The first line of message is “Goshin-gan- jōju” or actualization of divine will. The next line is world peace, economic, social and political stability of the governments and the countries in the world. We can live a carefree life because of the stable economic, social and political stabilities. Once we encounter disruptions of these basic elements, we would be tormented. Governance is corrupt in many countries throughout the world. There is no social order or laws and the citizens abandon their own countries and suffer in agony.

In the evening of that day, I went to the local supermarket to purchase items for offering for the monthly service to be held the following day. While I was waiting at the checkout counter, a barefooted man, possibly a homeless person asked me, “How are you?” He purchased a dozen beer and smiled. I felt like he was celebrating the life he enjoyed now. For me, he seemed to know the fragile nature of human life through the life as a homeless man. But it is these very people who could probably cope with disasters more than anybody else. A nuclear threat is an equalizer. When we face real danger, we would become one regardless of the socio-economic status we take for granted in daily living.

Early in the morning on October 14 (November 24), 1882, Kami-Sama imparted, “Those who have faith should not worry about the unexpected. There will be unexpected illnesses not only in summer, but also in winter. No one is aware of the blessings of Heaven and Earth which enable people to live. Kami shall have people become aware of the blessings of Heaven and Earth by having Konko Daijin be born throughout the world where the sun shines, in every country, without exception” (Oshirasegoto Oboecho 26-22). I want to witness the actualization of the message in this challenging world.

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 February 2018

- 1 Thr -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (9 am)
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
- 7 Wed -20th Memorial Service for the
Late Mr. Dennis F. Tamashiro (10 am)
- 11 Sun -Monthly Service for Ikigami Konko Daijin
(9 am)
- 18 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)
- 25 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

March 2018

- 1 Thr -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami
(7:30 pm)
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)

Hawaii Conference of Religions for Peace

The regular monthly meeting will be held on Monday, February 12, 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, February 16, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

KMH General Meeting

The regular KMH General Meeting will be held on Saturday, February 17, 2018 from 1:30 p.m. at Konko Mission of Honolulu

Honoring the Mitama Spirits

February

Umi Yasuyo	2/3/1965
Ichiro Yano	2/5/2006
Dennis Fujio Tamashiro	2/6/1998
Thomas Takahashi	2/9/2005
Yoshiyuki Momotomi	2/10/2003
Betsy Tomie Maesaka	2/10/2016
Rev. Yukio Hiramoto	2/10/2012
Mildred Chiyoko Oka	2/12/2004
Jiro Oho	2/14/1937
Rebecca Jean Burns	2/14/2013
Robert Yoshikazu Hirota	2/16/2014
Norma Teruko Katsura	2/18/2008
Elisa Albarran	2/20/1977
Rev. Michio Miyake	2/21/2017
Kay Yamamoto	2/22/2015
Marilynn Olsen	2/22/2009
Suetsuki Toyofuku	2/24/1995

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 332, 333 and 334)

No. 332: “She has been sick for a long time. Will she ever be cured?” Konko-Sama said, “Isn’t it better for her to be cured? You came here to have her cured, so you must not have any doubts about her recovery. From today, believe that she will gradually recover. As her body regains its strength she will be cured however old she may be. Practice faith while believing that she will gradually recover.” (II Akiyama Kinoe 1-2, 3 Kyoten page 416 to 417)

Believe an illness will be healed through your prayer.

The Rev. Kinoe Akiyama helped establish the foundations of the Konko Church of Amase in Okayama. When she was young, her mother suffered from a chronic illness for over ten years. In 1878, when Kinoe reached the age of 15, she made a visit to see the Founder from Kasaoka in hope of her mother’s healing of her illness.

The day she made a visit to see the Founder happened to be the day of the annual Grand Service of Tenchi Kane No Kami. She made a detailed account of her observation about Otani Village that was printed in the Konkokyo Kyoten Scriptures. She accompanied Kiyō Shiwaku for the pilgrimage. She forwarded her concerns about her mother to the Founder. In responding to her request, the Founder proceeded in front of the altar and extended a prayer. The Founder gave her a message in the form of “gosaiden” or divine message through the mouth of the Founder. Kinoe could not understand the message. Then Kiyō responded to the situation and asked the Founder, “Her mother has been sick for a long time, will she ever be cured?”

As Konko believers, it would be a normal course of response to seek help for any issues we want to get blessed with through the work of Toritsugi-Mediation. Despite the fact we pray to Kami for getting blessed of an illness, we could not have an absolute conviction that we would be blessed for sure. Somebody may say that it is

just the reflection of our lack of belief in Kami, or because we worry based on human-oriented perceptions. But it could be the nature of anybody else. We would hardly be able to develop an absolute conviction for the prayer we forward to Kami in our prayer.

The Founder didn’t give any specific directions for the extended concern of Kinoe unlike any fortune tellers who would say to a client, “You will surely be blessed; the illness will be healed in a limited time span; if you would follow my instruction, you shall get blessed for sure.” The Founder kindly asked Kinoe, “Isn’t it better for her to be cured? You came here to have her cured, so you must not have any doubts about her recovery.” The Founder reminded Kinoe to develop a solid conviction for the healing of her mother.

In my understanding, “Toritsugi-Mediation” does not mean that the Toritsugi-Mediator would respond to any concerned issues brought by believers to try to dissolve by extending prayers alone, but help the believers to develop an appropriate mindset and get engaged in the practice of faith accordingly. If the believers clearly identify appropriate paths to get connected to Kami, they are to be blessed.

Kinoe appreciated the extended thought from the Founder and helped her mother receive healing and enjoyed a fulfilling life.

No. 333: If people prayed before taking medicine, blessings would be quick. Instead, they take medical treatment before praying, so there are no divine blessings. (III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 47 Kyoten page 787)

Pray first and take medicine.

The Japanese expression, “薬れ” (kusure) is a verb that is quite unfamiliar with us. But the dictionary defined the word, “to treat with medicine.” On the other hand, “祈れ” (inore) means to pray for healing through divine work. The tone of the Founder’s message is a bit serious. If we direct our hearts towards Kami by extending a prayer before taking a medicine, we could get blessed quickly though the divine work. On the contrary, if we take medicine first and experience little improvement for the condition, we would try to extend a prayer of help. Even if you get blessed in such a manner, the Founder sternly stated that the healing could not be attributed to the work of Kami.

What is interesting in the message is that the Founder stated, “If people prayed before taking medicine, blessings would be quick.” In an assumption, the

Founder would say, “If they take medicine first before praying, it would take much time to get blessed.” But the Founder stated, “Instead, they take medical treatment before praying, so there are no divine blessings.” The Founder denied the practice of the believers who take medicine first before praying in such a manner, “There are no divine blessings.”

Sugi suffered two years in bed due to her prolonged illness. She might be deeply moved by the message extended from the Founder. In the original Japanese text of the quoted message, at the beginning, the Founder stated, “みんな” that means all people. But the word can also mean anything at all.

The reminder about the act of “kusure” can be applied not only for medication, but also be applicable to any elements in our daily living. As Konko believers, we have been mindful of appreciating the blessings of sustenance from Heaven and Earth. But occasionally we may behave in such an erratic manner pointed in the quoted message. We may experience an impasse and be reminded of directing our hearts towards Kami. As Konko believers, we should always be mindful of directing our hearts towards Kami first and then act accordingly.

No. 334: If you have a pain somewhere, think of applying sacred sake, then you will receive divine blessings. (*1 Ichimura Mitsugoro 2-55 Kyoten page 233 to 234*)

Think of applying sacred sake.

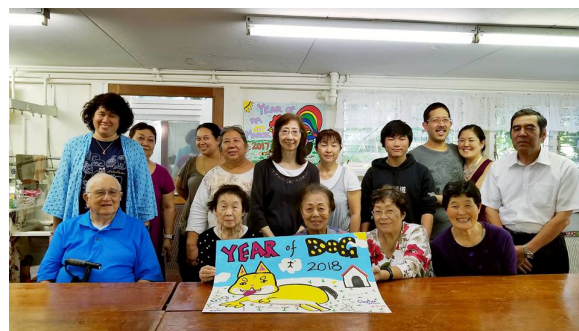
When I was young, my parents always were ready with a remedy of sacred soil (From the grounds of the Headquarters Church) and “omiki” sacred rice wine made into a paste. This paste was applied to any bruises and scratches I sustained. In those days, I thought such a practice was a primitive way of practicing faith. In this manner, many believers got blessings for such developments in daily living by the practice of applying mixed paste of “Otochi-san” (sacred soil from the ground at Headquarters Church) and “Omiki” sacred rice wine.

“Otochi-san” referred to the soil from the ground at the Headquarters Church, especially, around the grave site of the Founder. As a memento of their pilgrimage to “Gohonbu” the Main Church at Konko Town, they treasured the soil. The Headquarters Office responded to the situation and tried to discourage the practice by building a wooden fence around the grave site of the Founder to prevent the loss of the soil around the grave.

But I learned that we should preserve the pure heart of the Konko believers who exhibited to treasure the sacred soil from the grounds where the Founder lived and the “Omiki” sacred rice wine from the Main Church. Soon after I took a class of religion in college, I introduced the practice of applying the mixed paste of soil and sacred rice wine in a tone of degradation because I felt a bit of shame in witnessing a seemingly primitive religious practice of those believers. Professor Tomonobu Ishibashi responded to my extended thought as follows. “When I studied in Germany I had an interest in a Christian church where they rumored that those patients with TB (tuberculosis) made visits to the church would be healed of their ailments. When I made a visit to church, I found a long line of people waiting for their turn to kiss the toes of a plaster image of the Virgin Mary. The toes didn’t retain the original shape and shrank because of the countless numbers of people who kissed the toes with their lips. Normally, the practice of kissing the toes of the statue being ridden with germs and TB by countless patients could be prohibitively dangerous. But we should respect their pure religious hearts exhibited in the practice of believing the work of the Virgin Mary.” I was so surprised to hear such an unexpected response from the professor.

The Founder didn’t instruct believers, “When you have a pain somewhere, get blessed by applying ‘Omiki’ sacred rice wine.” He just stated, “Think of applying sacred rice wine when you have a pain.” We should preserve the pure hearts that can appreciate the sacred nature of “Omiki” sacred rice wine being blessed through the virtue of Kami.

Church New Year’s Party held on January 21st



Yaki-Mochi held on Sunday January 7th

