



KONKO MISSION BULLETIN

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Being Trusted by Kami

By *Yasuhiro Yano*
Head Minister

The one year memorial service for the late Rev. Masahiko Yoshino of Konko Mission of Honolulu will be observed on May 18 at the Honolulu Church. The Rev. Michiyoshi Yasutake from Konko Church of Amagi will officiate the service. The Rev. Koichi Konko of Honolulu Church requested me to make an English translation of the saishi prayer scripts used for the services held right after the passing of the minister, for a publication to be issued in the one year memorial of the minister. While I was translating the messages in English, I understand one element about Yoshino Sensei that is highlighted throughout his life as a Konko minister. He was a trusted person by his spiritual mentor, the Rev. Fumio Yasutake. He was a trusted person by Kami-Sama. This is something significant in the religious world. While I was in Amagi for religious training, the Rev. Fumio Yasutake used to say to the student ministers, “*Kami-Sama aiteno shinjin zo*” or your focus should be placed on Kami-Sama for your religious training at this church.

Yoshino Sensei acquired the most treasured element as a Konko minister, the solid trust from the Rev. Fumio Yasutake, the spiritual mentor through his unconditional receptiveness of the messages and instructions rendered by this great spiritual figure throughout his life at the Amagi Church. The Rev. Fumio Yasutake used to express his solid confidence in Yoshino Sensei in such manners, “*Masahiko nara Daijyoubu, Masahiko Tanomuzo*” or “I have a solid trust in Masahiko and trust you would fulfill my thoughts and prayers” quoted in the Main Saishi Payer read during the funeral service by the Rev. Michiyoshi Yasutake. I still vividly remember that the Rev. Fumio Yasutake used to remind the student ministers, “The trusting relationship you cultivate with me at this church does not merely mean a

personal relationship between you and me alone. But the relationship can be relevantly applied in your trusting relationship between you and Kami-Sama. You will appreciate my message when you leave this place and engage in your own missionary work.” Yoshino Sensei lived up to fulfill the way of living his mentor, the Oyasensei demonstrated himself.

As I reached this age, I feel like I can fully appreciate the messages given by the Rev. Fumio Yasutake. He also related that the most secured and fulfilling life is being trusted by Kami-Sama who would extend full confidence, just like the Founder Konko Daijin. We can gain that divine confidence in each of us through our engagement into the practice of faith. Without our engagement in the practice of faith, there would be no way we can gain trusting relationships with Kami-Sama.

A Konko believer is a person who believes in Tenchi Kane No Kami, Our Divine Parent of the Universe. To believe in Tenchi Kane No Kami is to believe and practice the teachings of the Founder. Believing the teachings and practicing the teachings of the Founder makes us mindful of the blessings of Tenchi Kane No Kami, Our Divine Parent of the Universe in things we may take for granted in our daily living. Exercising mindfulness of the blessings we enjoy lead us to appreciate the blessings given as such. Be it a glass of water, a grain of rice, the food we enjoy every day, the bodily functions, abilities, the air we breathe, the rain water, the sun light and the list goes on and on.

The base and foundation of how we act in our daily living is restricted based upon what spirituality we exercise in our daily living. If we are to pursue the Konko faith, we need to exercise our spirituality as Konko believers for anything we do in our daily life.

Are you aware you are a Konko believer? Or are you just a person who happened to get involved in the practice of the faith for the time being? We need to define how we get involved in the practice of the Konko faith.

Identifying ourselves to be Konko believers cannot be achieved overnight. It takes time to nurture our belief in Kami-Sama. It takes time to lay spiritual ground for us to grow as Konko believes. We need to develop our solid relationship with Kami-Sama through our constant involvement.

The messages in the Kyoten Scripture point out we need at least five to ten years of involvement in the practice of the Konko faith to become a full fledged Konko believer who is not easily swayed. And to become a full fledged Konko minister, a person may need 11 years of spiritual training after ordainment. These numbers have valid reasons. And we can learn to appreciate the need to get involved in the practice of the faith more assertively; otherwise we may not enjoy full blessings of the Konkokyo faith tradition.

The Konko faith is more of a way of life. We need to actualize our spiritual transformation through our involvement in the practice of the faith. Spiritual transformation means we have our own distinguished spirituality that can be different from other secular spirituality.

One example of this spirituality is how we see a glass of water, the food we eat, the air we breathe, the road we travel on, the car we drive, the work we perform, the act of church visitation and so forth. Do we see these things at random based upon the spirituality of the Konko faith? There is an old legendary story about an empty jar. A minister placed an empty jar on a table and asked his students in his church what the jar holds. They just replied there is nothing in the jar; just air. To this the minister replied why they cannot see the air in the jar as blessed air. The jar holds blessed air. This can be derived only through the exercise of spirituality which can identify Kami's blessings.

As you get involved in the practice of the Konko faith, I hope you would evolve to be a believer who can exercise the spirituality of the Konko faith, and not just a person who happens to get involved in the practice of the faith.

Konko-Sama Says . . .

There are no requests that cannot come true. Request through Konko Daijin. You can receive divine blessings for anything. (II Shiota Hachiemon 2)

No matter how well-educated or how smart you are, merely having knowledge about the faith of Kami is not enough. You cannot receive Kami's virtue unless the teachings of the faith are deeply absorbed into your heart and your faith is expressed in your life. (III Jinkyu Kyogoroku 151)

Bulletin Board

Monthly Services for May 2014

- 1 Thur -Monthly Service for Tenchi Kane No Kami (7:30 pm)
- 3 Sat -Rev. Rodney Yano & Ms. Fong Yip's wedding At Haleiwa Ali'i Beach Park (11 am)
- 4 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-Wailuku Church Spring Grand Service (11 am)
- 11 Sun -Monthly Service, Ikigami Konko Daijin (9 am)
-Hilo Church Spring Grand Service (11 am)
- 17 Sat -5th Memorial Service for the Late Rev. Mitsumasa Yasutake at the Waipahu Church (11 am)
- 18 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)
-1 Year Memorial Service for the Late Rev. Masahiko Yoshino at the Konko Mission of Honolulu (11 am)
- 25 Sun -Monthly Memorial Service (9 am)

June 2014

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

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, May 12, 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, May 23 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.

Wahiawa Church 4th Summer Ohana Camp

We will hold the 4th Summer Ohana Camp at Camp HR Erdman (Mokuleia) from Saturday, June 21 through Sunday, June 22, 2014. The theme of this year is “Blessed Water.” Deadline for the application is Sunday, May 25, 2014. Application form is available at the church.

Memorial Day

We will make a visit to the Punchbowl National Cemetery on Monday, May 26. We will meet at the Konko Mission of Honolulu at 8:00 a.m. and carpool to the cemetery. We will also make a visit to the Mililani Memorial Park and visit the tombs of the believers affiliated to the Konkokyo faith community.

Honoring the Mitama Spirits



May

Toshiko Yogo	5/2/2010
Kiyoka Takahashi	5/5/1999
Rev. Masahiko Yoshino	5/9/2013
Helen Yoshie Eguchi	5/9/2006
Saichi Eguchi	5/9/1997
Rev. Hidejiro Hosaka	5/16/1972
Fernie Furusho	5/26/2001
Hideo Fujimoto	5/26/2005
Hiroshi Katsura	5/26/1959

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 Matsutaro Kōsaka contributed the insightful articles. The translation is provided by Yasuhiro Yano. (Reference pages 79, 80 and 81)

No. 79

In this world the most indecent thing is avarice.
(I Ichimura Mitsugoro 2-13-1 Kyoten page 224)

Avarice, the most indecent thing in the world

The Founder extended his thought about greediness.

The Founder Konko Daijin firmly stated that the most indecent thing in this world is greediness. The greediness

in the quoted message refers to self-centeredness and greediness we discussed in the previous page 78. We seem to be able to visualize the facial expression of the Founder in reflection of his strong disapproval of greediness while he was relating this message to Mitsugoro Ichimura. The Founder strongly condemned those people who got indulged in pursuit of greediness. In reflection of his thoughts, there was not a trace element that the Founder himself acted in fulfillment of greediness. Instead, we can find many instances in which the Founder should have acted to get more benefits for himself.

Once our mind is occupied with greediness, we see the world through that perspective of greediness. Even if we have enjoyed a trusting relationship with other people, if we identify the presence of greediness in the relationship, the trust we have build would reflectively collapse. Even if we have enjoyed a loving relationship with someone, once we find any trace elements of greediness, the relationship will instantly collapse. Greediness has a strong power to devaluate what we have valued and spoil the purity of the heart we hold.

Any societies of people formed based on greediness show off its true nature of greed outwardly. Even if the majority of people try to help create a valid society in good faith, just one element of greediness is ingrained in the operation of the society, the entire society will lose its validity. We can fully appreciate that it is because of this negative powerful nature of greediness that the Founder strongly condemned that greed is the most indecent thing in the world.

As for the Founder, there were two elements he demonstrated in his faith life. The first is to show a true sincere heart toward Kami-Sama. The other is to extend his deep compassion to others. Those two elements were yielded from the heart that was just the opposite of the heart filled with greediness. We should be keenly mindful in identifying elements of greed in our life.

No. 80

Be careful not to be tormented by yourself.
(III Shinkun 2-24 Kyoten page 776)

Self torment

The rough meaning of the quoted message is that we should be careful not to be misguided by the element of greediness (originally referred to as *kokoro no oni* in Japanese) in our own heart, otherwise we may end up in the wrong path from which we may never be able to recover.

There is a Japanese expression, “自虐” or self-condemnation. There can be some similarity with the quoted message, “to be tormented by ourselves” in the meaning of “自虐” or self-condemnation. But “自虐” or self-condemnation is the state of mind that we condemn ourselves in self reflection of attempting to correct the

wrong and pursue the right path. While, “to be tormented by ourselves” implies to the state of mind in which the element of greediness (originally referred to *as kokoro no oni*) try to solicit ourselves to take the wrongful path for self-destruction.

In that case, the element of greediness is the culprit who victims ourselves. But the matter cannot be that simplified. The element of greediness has the nature of expanding in corresponding to the external elements of surrounding and infused information. In other words, the element of greediness is cultured by the victims we have become.

The one who is condemned finds himself in a dilemma in which he has to deal with the one who tries to pursue the right path. If we can identify the existence of the enemy to be destroyed we can confront the enemy, but the enemy to be destroyed exists inside our own hearts. In this dilemma, it is difficult to try and deal with the situation.

We can sustain and perpetuate ourselves because of the fundamental elements of wants and desires. How we deal with the problems caused by the element of greediness is the issue we have to dissolve through our engagement in the practice of faith.

No. 81

Konko Daijin tells how he received blessings from Tenchi Kane No Kami. For those who doubt and do not listen, let them be. They are to be looked upon with compassion. They will receive blessings when the time comes. You will understand this when you have children. Children, who do not listen to their parents are most distressing. Parents can do nothing for children who do not listen to them.

(III Konko Kyoso Gorikai 20-1, 2 Kyoten page 781)

People who do not listen to the teachings

Konko Daijin seemed to show deep grief for those people who doubt and do not listen to him and confined in the state of trouble.

Initially, the Founder Konko Daijin stated, “Konko Daijin tells how he received blessings from Tenchi Kane No Kami.” The serious tone of the message sounds like, “Teachings of Konko Daijin shall never be taken lightly or ignored. Each and every message is a divine message.”

Because he was aware of the divine nature of the messages, he just could not believe that there were people who doubt and did not listen. In encountering such people, Konko Daijin felt deep grief.

Konko Daijin knew that he could not force them to listen and should not bother them. But it could be the nature of the Founder he just could not ignore the people in suffering without taking any actions. He could not help them, but felt sorry for them. Those two thoughts occupied his mind.

He extended his thoughts and prayers that they would get blessed when the times come.

“Tsumaranai” or unfulfilled or distressed in the original Japanese statement implies that the parents feel distressed in dealing with the child who won’t listen to them, at the same time, the child himself would also experience distress.

What about believers who listen to the messages from the Founder? It is not necessarily true that they appreciate the true meanings of the messages correctly. We should be mindful if we are not distressing Kami-Sama and the Founder for the way we appreciate the messages.

Wedding of Rodney Takashi Yano & Fong Yip

“Omedeto Gozaimasu” and Congratulations for the newly married couple, the Rev. Rodney Takashi Yano and Mrs. Fong Yip. The wedding ceremony was held at the Haleiwa Ali’i Beach Park on Saturday, May 3, 2014. It was one of the most memorable and beautiful wedding ceremonies with blue sky, blue ocean, and a shower of love and aloha from many people from the Mainland, China, Japan and Hawaii.



Beautiful pictures by Masaki Photography