



## impermanence (n)

/im'pə:mənəns/

The state or fact of lasting for only a limited period of time

Oxford Dictionary

By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano  
Head Minister

We have been changing as we get older. We have spent 46 years here in Hawaii. As we witness the growth of our children, it is apparent that our children have evolved to take turns to educate us; the role of educating has been reversed. "Hurry up, okaasan, otoosan!" became a regular expression in the family. It is a blessing that we have been enjoying the sound growth of our children in this manner. It is a natural way of getting old and shows the nature of impermanence, one of the main themes in the Buddhist community, I believe. Nothing stays the same permanently. It is the blessed nature of things to exist in this world. Changes in our lives take place unexpectedly, as seen in events like the Lahaina Fire.

We want to extend our deep thoughts for the people directly involved in the unprecedented tragic events. The Lahaina fire has changed the lives of thousands of people in a devastating manner that we could hardly imagine in a few hours.

As of today, it is said that 115 people have lost their lives, and over 300 people are still unaccounted for. The town of Lahaina was pretty much completely burned down.

If we plan to make that happen, that perfect tragic fire would be almost impossible. Many elements of the fire have contributed to that magnitude of fire. The fire destroyed the lives of the people involved in the fire. I just pray that those who have survived will be able to rebuild their lives.

To be honest, for some reason, not only myself, but many other people may have been aware of the increased natural disasters in these days. Look at the gigantic fire in Canada lately; look at the storms and rainfalls we have never experienced before. We may be able to manipulate the weather and atmospheric conditions to take advantage of our lives, but everything

takes place in the given conditions of the presence of the Earth. Some people see the Earth as a confined sphere in which we live. The presence of all living things in the container contributes to the sustainability of the lives in the given condition. We are all interdependently connected to every element in this given global living sphere. Those people who lost every possession and belonging in the fire are still interconnected to elements of sustenance of lives.

We are to get rearranged in the interdependent relationships for the continued sustenance of our lives through the course of recovery. We want to be of some help to the people of Maui for their recovery and rebuilding of their lives. The donations we could make as individuals could be just a drop of water in the ocean, but it is a show of our prayer for those people in need.

We cannot control the heavenly movements, such as the moon and the sun. What if the moon's rotation changed suddenly? The entire Earth would be affected in a devastating manner.

Kami-Sama told Konko Daijin, "The Way of the Universe never changes. Like the regular motions of the moon, sun, and tides, human living shall remain the same. I shall prevent fires, premature death, disasters, illnesses, and bad luck for you. There is no need to worry" (Oboecho 17-22-2, 3).

### Konko-Sama said...

"There are people who claim that the Universe works this way and that, but they really don't understand it. If they did, they would be able to stop the rise and fall of tides" (I Kondo Fujimori 9).

Konko Daijin said, "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.

[GIII: *Jinkyu Kyogoroku*/ed. Kataoka, Jiro:105.1]

2 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." [GIII:*Jinkyu Kyogoroku*/ed. Kataoka, Jiro:105.2]

3 No matter how good he is, if he doesn't practice faith, he will not receive divine blessings. [GIII: *Jinkyu Kyogoroku*/ed. Kataoka, Jiro:105.3]

## Bulletin Board

### September 2023

- 1 Fri -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami  
(7:30 pm)  
3 Sun -Sunday Service at 9 am  
10 Sun -Monthly Svc for Ikigami Konkō Daijin (9 am)  
17 Sun -Sunday Service (9 am)  
-Honolulu Autumn Memorial Svc (10 am)  
24 Sun -Autumn Memorial Service (10 am)

### October 2023

- 1 Sun -Monthly Svc for Tenchi Kane No Kami  
(9 am)  
-Honolulu Church Autumn Grand Service &  
Rev. Sugako Yoshino's 1-Year Memorial  
Service (11 am)  
13 Fri -Wahiawa Church Autumn Grand Service (6 pm)

#### ●Monthly Volunteer Activity at St. Francis

The next activity will be on Fri, September 8 @ 10:30 am

#### ●Garage Sale

We will conduct a garage sale on Saturday, September 16, 2023 from 9 am to 2 pm. Proceeds will go to the Konkōkyo Headquarters and to Konkō Mission of Wailuku who has been accommodating church related people who have lost their houses by the Lahaina Fire Disaster on August 8.

#### ●KMH Kyoten Study Group via Zoom

The main reference book will be "Voice of the Universe."

Join us: September 13 and 27 (Wed. 5 pm-6 pm)

**ZOOM ID:** 815 2952 9465 **PASS:** 914385

#### ●HCRP Meeting on ZOOM

Monday, September 17 6:30 pm-7:30 pm

#### HCRP Interfaith Community Clean-up

Please join the scheduled HCRP coordinated interfaith community clean up at Kakaako Waterfront Park on Saturday, September 23, 2023, from 9 am to 10 am. Just show up at the park. Dress comfortably. Bring your own water bottle. Items for the clean-up will be provided.

#### ●KMH CEOC Meeting

ZOOM on Friday, September 22 (3-4 pm).

## Honoring the Mitama Spirits

### September

Mikiko Yamamoto	9/3/2003
Harumi Tokumoto	9/7/2001
Tatsuyuki Kataoka	9/7/2007
Hiroko Toyoda	9/9/2018
Ben Furusho	9/15/1997
Richard Masao Iwasa	9/17/2005
Kameji Takeshima	9/17/2000
Richard Tadayoshi Noguchi	9/27/2009



## 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 Shōgai" or "The Life of the Founder Konkō Daijin" authored by the Rev. Mikio Seto, and was published by Konkōkyo Theological Research Center. The publication was made in 1980. There are many biographies about the life of the Founder Konkō Daijin. I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. An English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (Page 110 to 113) (continued from the previous issue)*



## The neighborhood awareness of Bunji's life

In March, Bunji started using the movement of his hands in a prayer posture to predict whether his prayers would be fulfilled. When his hands moved upward, it indicated that his wishful prayer would come true. Conversely, when his hands moved downward, it signified that Kami had responded that the prayer would not be fulfilled.

In July, Bunji had an extraordinary experience where he believed Kami's message was conveyed through his own voice, and he followed these messages faithfully. Consequently, Bunji's way of life began to deviate from the norms of ordinary villagers. Kami's messages were conveyed discreetly to Bunji, and he kept them to himself, refraining from sharing them with others. However, the villagers started noticing his unusual behaviors, especially his family members, who became acutely aware of his unconventional actions.

Typically, people are cautious about accepting religious practices exhibited by others, especially in a traditional village where established religious customs are followed. Nevertheless, they grew curious about witnessing unfamiliar phenomena that went beyond the ordinary. Simultaneously, they cautiously recognized that these unusual practices could disrupt societal norms, leading to some individuals despising those who displayed unconventional behaviors. Such reactions are natural when people encounter something new and unfamiliar. Bunji's family members, in particular, were acutely aware of how the villagers perceived his way of life, and they hoped he wouldn't become too engrossed in his faith. They experienced fear and opposition toward Bunji, who unwaveringly followed Kami's instructions, such as the practice of not applying oil to the rice fields to deter rice insect damage, which could have a significant impact on their lives if it went awry.

As the rice harvesting season arrived, people observed that Bunji's crops remained undamaged. Bunji could efficiently operate the rice husk removal mortar

by himself, a task typically requiring two people. He accurately predicted the weather conditions for fieldwork, and his daily life exhibited positive and extraordinary qualities that garnered the admiration of the villagers. This newfound confidence in Bunji's unwavering faith in Kami led his family members to trust him. Iwa Kawate, his adoptive mother, witnessed Bunji's way of life with admiration and even referred to him as "kami-sama." Later in life, Bunji realized that these reactions from his family and villagers were perhaps Kami's strategy to guide him towards the path Kami desired.

#### **(IV) First Disciple of Kami**

Bunji derived joy from witnessing divine blessings in his daily life. Kami had a purpose in being present in Bunji's life, though Bunji couldn't fully grasp Kami's intent at that time. Kami bestowed upon him the title of "Shitaba no ujiko" and established a channel of communication between Bunji and Kami while ensuring Bunji's protection. Kami recognized the potential for Bunji to bring salvation to people through his way of life. Therefore, Kami allowed Bunji to break free from the constraints of societal norms and traditions, exposing him to an extraordinary and uncharted world as part of a trial, during which Bunji encountered remarkable and miraculous experiences. Kami's intention to identify Bunji's potential for saving people became more pronounced in the autumn of 1859.

On September 23, 1858 (October 29), Kane No Kami Sama made a request, "Tensho Kotaijin Sama, please give Bunji to me." Initially, Tensho Kotaijin Sama agreed, saying, "Okay, he is yours." Kane No Kami Sama then conveyed, "Bunji, you have been given to Me, and I will make you My First Disciple." However, Tensho Kotaijin Sama later changed their mind, stating, "Kane No Kami Sama, although I initially said he is yours, I cannot give him to you now. There is no one like him." Kane No Kami Sama persisted, arguing that not granting Bunji would make it a lie, and proposed an alternative solution involving Bunji's son, Asakichi, worshiping at their hiromae when he comes of age. Eventually, Tensho Kotaijin Sama acquiesced, and Kane No Kami Sama affirmed, "Bunji shall become My First Disciple. I won't take him away from here. I will instruct him right here. There is no need for concern" (Oboegaki 6-1).

Before delving into the meaning of the peculiar dialogue between Kane No Kami and Tensho Kotaijin, it's essential to clarify Bunji's relationship with Tenchi Kane No Kami.

During the final years of the Tokugawa Era in Japan, people generally held deep reverence for the Tensho Kotaijin shrine, considering it the nation's predominant shrine. This reverence stemmed from their perception of Tensho Kotaijin, who was enshrined at Ise Shrine. It was a long-standing Japanese tradition for individuals to embark on a pilgrimage to Ise Shrine at least once in their lifetime. In each household, a scroll bearing the name of Tensho Kotaijin was prominently displayed at the family alcove. People were familiar with the daily recitation of the "Rokkon Shojo." The prayer begins with the opening phrase, "Tensho Kotaijin states...". People held great reverence and worshiped Tensho Kotaijin as a deity associated with agriculture, particularly regarding the deity as equal in importance to the Sun Deity. Bunji, like many common people, also held deep reverence for Tensho Kotaijin. Bunji and his adoptive father, spanning two generations, were tasked with a public role, assisting the "Oshi," the highest-ranked priest of the Ise Shrine, in overseeing the annual delivery of "taima," a substance designated for religious purposes involving cannabis, to neighboring villages.

This familial connection closely tied them to the religious traditions of the Ise Shrine.

The presence of Tensho Kotaijin was deeply ingrained in both the village and the nation's collective consciousness. Bunji, in particular, was deeply immersed in this faith tradition. On the contrary, Kane No Kami sought to establish a relationship with Bunji and endeavored to manifest as a deity showing potential for saving humanity on a larger scale.

Regarding this aspect of the nature of Tenchi Kane No Kami, The Founder conveyed, "Tensho Kotaijin is the Kami of Japan, considered the ancestral deity of the Emperor. Tenchi Kane No Kami is not just a Kami-Sama of Japan; He is the Kami-Sama that governs the entire universe" (I Tokunaga, Kenji 3-2).



*On behalf of the Ehimekenjinkai, the Rev. Yasuhiro Yano and Rev. Edna Matsuoka perform the annual Ehimeamaru Summer Memorial Service and the Ocean Safety Prayer on 8/26/23*