

## Foreword

### Just as a Sunshine of the Spring

by the Reverend Shinichi Hashimoto  
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The following story took place before the Konko Faith (Konkokyo) became independent as a religious organization in 1900. In 1885, two years after the Founder's passing, Konkokyo established "Konko Church of Shinto" and officially belonged to the Shinto Administration Bureau (Later called "Main Bureau of Shinto"). With this, the Konko Faith obtained an official approval of its propagation. Under this circumstance, however, Konkokyo was unable to let people in society know the teachings of Konko Daijin just as they were, since this system meant that the Konko Faith would constantly be under a strong influence of the Main Bureau of Shinto. Because of this, the Konko Faith, as an organization, decided to move towards

independence.

What I'm going to share with you is a story during a period when Konkokyo called itself "Konko Church of Shinto." The then "Rules of the Konko Church of Shinto" stipulated that "Church's Grand Ceremony is to be held on April 9th and 10th." This statement is found in the section of "Ceremony." These "Rules" were approved on June 2nd, 1885, which helps us assume that "Church's Grand Ceremony" began to be held (in April) in 1886. With these historical facts, we can probably say safely that the "roots" of our present-day "Grand Ceremony for the Principle Parent of the Universe (Tenchi Kane No Kami)" are "Church's Grand Ceremony" that started in the year 1886. Later on, the late Reverend Yoshizo Yasuda, a former Chief Administrative Director of Konkokyo, remarked, "As for the ceremony in spring, Konkokyo has held this ceremony as a ceremony of our Parent Kami, the Principle Parent of the Universe (Tenchi Kane No Kami) ever since the Konko Faith took on the appearance of a religious

organization as Konko Church of Shinto." Rev. Yasuda's remarks back up our assumption on this subject, I believe.

The late Reverend Norio Sato (often known as "Chief Vassal" or "Shukuro" in the Konkokyo community) looked back on those days and recounted the situation at that time, saying "We used to hold Grand Ceremony, where we exchanged our joy and gratitude with one another, for Konko Daijin's faith (Konkokyo) was gradually expanding." Regarding Konkokyo's situations in 1886 and 1887, The Rev. Sato said:

"At the time of Grand Ceremony in the Sacred Grounds of the Konko Faith, Head Ministers and Associate Ministers of local Konko churches got together and they spoke to the Kancho (the highest and most responsible position of a religious body. Kancho was supposed to supervise its own organization) about the then current situations of Konkokyo's propagation and which teachings (of Konko Daijin) we should actively utilize in our efforts of propagation. The more time passed by, the

more lay believers came to join us. We had too many people in one place for us to speak to Kancho. The fact that we could no longer have a meeting with Kancho means that the Headquarters' Grand Ceremony has become quite prosperous and lively. (omitted) Following what is being done at Go-hombu, each local church of Konkokyo soon came to have a meeting between church members and their ministers at the occasion of Grand Ceremony. This is something our Parent Kami welcomes. Our Grand Ceremony has become such a big religious event, because Kami is pleased with what we are doing. And I want every one of you, the people of the Konko Faith, to know this very thing." (quoted from the April 3rd issue 1925 of "Followers/Believers of the Konko Faith")

In this way, the Grand Ceremony in spring was a Grand Ceremony where head ministers and other ministers of local Konkokyo churches got together, admired the Virtue of our Parent Kami of the Universe, thanked Kami and shared their mutual joy that the Konko Faith was

spreading to many parts of Japan and even to lands outside Japan. The number of people who shared this joy got bigger and bigger as time passed by, and there were finally too many people in the Sacred Grounds of Konkokyo for head ministers and ministers to have a meeting with the Kancho. This is why it became a huge religious ceremony as it is today.

We often call visiting the Konko Headquarters (for worshipping Kami) "visiting the Headquarters for expressing gratitude." Here, I believe that the word "gratitude" contains a meaning of "Konko members talking to one another about their mutual joy of practicing faith in Kami." The Chief Vassal/Shukuro (the late Rev. Norio

Sato) teaches us that if we bring the blessings we've received from our Parent Kami to the Sacred Grounds, talk to each other about our happy situation with joy and gratitude, convey the wonderfulness of practicing faith in Kami to people around us and work hard so that this circle of joy will expand gently, warmly and powerfully just like a sunshine of the spring, our sincerity will definitely reach Kami. Since the Spring Grand Ceremony is just around the corner, I pray that we will seek to practice faith in Kami which will enable the circle of joy stemming from our senior fellow Konko members to flourish and expand even further from now on.

## Expressing Our Gratitude to Kami in a Way Kami Will Be Pleased the Most

- Upon the (Spring) Grand Ceremony for the Principle Parent of the Universe -

**The Konkokyo Headquarters will hold the (Spring) Grand Ceremony for the Principle Parent of the Universe (Tenchi Kane No Kami) on March 30 (at 10:00), April 3 (at 13:30) and 6 (ditto).**

**We explain (to you) the aim of this Ceremony, its program and additional events we are planning to have on these respective Ceremony days as follows.**



We hold the (Spring) Grand Ceremony for Tenchi Kane No Kami in order for us to express our sincere gratitude for Kami's great grace and profound providence. We hold it also in order for us to pray to Kami that Kami's wish will be realized

and fulfilled, considering Kami's will in sending Ikigami Konko Daijin (our dear Founder as the Perpetual Deity of Sacred Mediation/Toritsugi) to each one of us.

The Principle Parent of the Universe imparts, "If or when people do not receive Kami's blessings, remain unsaved and find themselves in hardship accordingly, it will mean that Kami is not playing Kami's role enough." These words of Kami signifies Kami's immeasurable, deep affection for all people as Kami's children. This statement of Kami also shows that Kami constantly



reaches out Kami's hands to each one of us in order to save us.

The Founder, Konko Daijin, keenly sensed and perceived such a deep affection of Kami for all people. Konko Daijin later taught, "If or when people remain unsaved, Kami and Konko Daijin will also equally remain unsaved." True to his own words, Konko Daijin prayed to our Parent Kami for his worshippers to be saved as if their problems and/or sufferings were his own. The Founder also intensified his prayers to Kami so that those people will become aware of Kami's profound care for them and Kami's abundant blessings upon them. The Founder taught his worshippers that they should learn to live their lives in a way



that was in (full) accordance with the "Law of the Universe."

When we take a glance at what is going on in this world today, we soon find out that divisions and conflicts are



becoming even more pronounced in many parts of the globe. We need to understand that these divisions and conflicts are not taking place far

away from us and that these problems are directly linked to our daily lives. Many of us have troubles around us such as human relationship problems. We are not in peace when our human relationship with people is not smooth and hostility-free. We then see that it casts a dark shadow upon our hearts and we will soon start to suffer from deep sorrow and intense adversity.



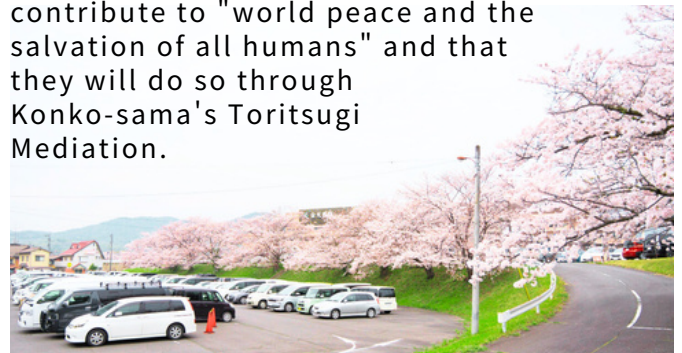
Even when unpleasant events/problems disturb our minds, and even when we are deeply sad and discouraged accordingly, we, the believers of the

Konko Faith, know that we should go to our respective local Konko church and ask for Sacred Mediation at the Mediation Place/Okekai, particularly when we are in deep trouble. Through receiving Toritsugi Mediation, we can encourage ourselves to cherish our connection with people around us via our bond with our Parent Kami. We also get to confirm our connection with things around us. We then get to see our heart become invigorated and show a light called salvation. This is the very working of Konkokyo, and it is also the working of konko believers who have lit a lamp in their hearts.



The Founder taught, "Go and tell people about the blessings you received from our Parent Kami. I say this because those people do not know what Kami can do for them yet. By doing so, you can help people around you become saved by Kami. And this is the BEST way to express your gratitude for Kami." Kami expects us to do this, and we should therefore not only receive divine blessings for ourselves but also tell people in need about this Faith and help them become saved, living with our Parent Kami every single day via our faith in Kami.

As we will soon hold Grand Ceremony for the Principle Parent of the Universe, we would like to re-recognize the divine wish of Kami and re-appreciate the faith of Ikigami Konko Daijin, whom Kami sent to each of us. Kami sent him to us in order to fulfill His wish. I sincerely pray that each one of Konko believers will usefully contribute to "world peace and the salvation of all humans" and that they will do so through Konko-sama's Toritsugi Mediation.



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## The Program of the Ceremony

1. Processional of the Officiants
2. The Opening of the Curtains before the Altar
3. Solemn Greeting
4. Kami Prayer
5. Mediation Prayer
6. Main Prayer by the Chief Officiant
7. Tamagushi Offering by the Chief Officiant
8. Recitation of Tenchi Kakitsuke
9. Tamagushi Offering by the Representatives
10. Address by the Chief Administrative Director of Konkokyo
11. Adoration Prayer
12. Hymn, "Shining Laurels of Kami and Humanity"
13. Solemn Acknowledgement
14. Recessional of the Officiants

A kibi-mai dance will be performed after the officiants leave the stage

