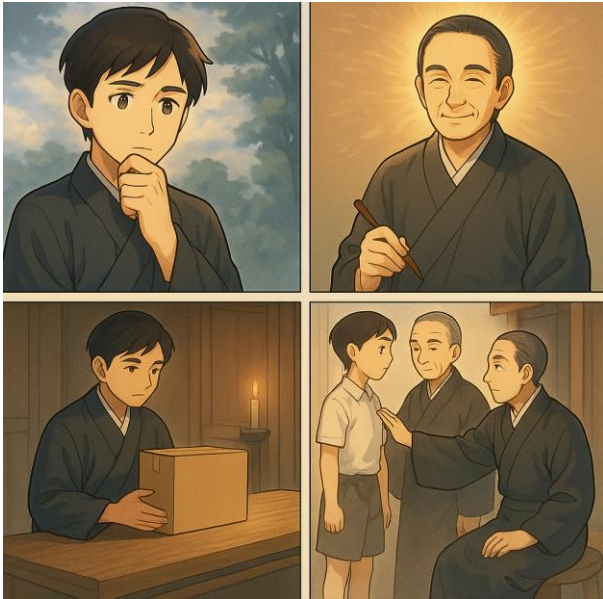




Birth of Kami and Man



By Rev. Yasuhiro Yano
Head Minister

One day, recently, one of the local ministers asked me point-blank, “What is Kami-Sama?” I referred to the expression of the Life Force: Tenchi Kane No Kami. Kami is the universal energy that sustains everything in the world.

I thought I found the answer to his question. We cannot see the presence of wind, but can identify the presence of wind by the flow of wind that affects the trees and the movement of clouds. The same could be said about the presence of Kami. We cannot see Kami-Sama but can identify the presence of Kami through the presence of anything in the world.

Just a few days ago, I received a package for an order I made. On one side of the cardboard box, I found an interesting message printed: “Without you, I’m empty inside.” I thought that the message reflected the same concept of “Ujiko atte-no Kami, Kami atte-no Ujiko” or “Man is man because of Kami, and Kami is Kami because of man.” The concept shows the exact nature of the relationship between Kami and man. The much easier way to understand this concept is shown by a message from the 4th Konko-Sama, Rev. Kagamitaro

Konko. He composed a Japanese verse, “父母も子供と共に生まれたり、育たねばならぬ 子も父母も,” which could be translated, “Parents are born upon the birth of a child, may both parents and child enjoy sound growth hereafter.”

Only through the presence of an individual who can identify the nature of the Life Force: Tenchi Kane No Kami manifests His presence in the world. And the initial individual who did was the Founder, Ikigami Konko Daijin.

"Konko Daijin says that he is a manure carrier and that people should pray to Tenchi Kane No Kami. But through Konko Daijin, Tenchi Kane No Kami's blessings can now be received. For thousands of years, Kane No Kami has been called a fearful kami. But through Konko Daijin, Kami has been revealed to the world. Konko Daijin is Kami's savior. Even for people, through Konko Daijin, they can now receive Kane No Kami's blessings. He is the people's savior as well.

Konko Daijin is the savior for Kami and people. Give your requests to Konko Daijin. Listening to and obeying what he says is the same as obeying Kami. Follow the words of Konko Daijin well, and practice faith." [GII:Kondo, Fujimori:3.3]

We wake up in the morning and prepare for the day of work as ministers. I prepare rice offerings. When shaping the cooked rice, we put on masks—a gesture showing reverence to the presence of Kami. We prepare for the service; every time, we clean up the entire place, including the walls and inside the altar, as preparation for the service to be held. It is a ritual of purification. We prepare for the service in the state of awareness of the presence of Kami. Symbolically, we put on masks to do things in reverence and purification, maybe based on Japanese tradition. We hold weekly, monthly, and annual church services in awareness of the blessings we have received through the presence of Kami.

I also remembered an episode shared by Rev. Fumio Yasutake. When he was young, on one occasion during the evening prayer—after the prayer service—they cleaned up the room daily, and each person had their own role for the daily routine. Some

offerings placed on the altar would be removed by the Head Minister, Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake, who was a bit advanced in age. Rev. Fumio Yasutake felt like he wanted to help the situation and walked into the sanctuary with a casual thought of, “I’ll go and help.” Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake responded to the situation by looking at him with a demeanor of, “Do not bother, be mindful of this sacred space.” He just could not help Oyasensei at that time. He quite often quoted this episode as a reference to being mindful of the presence of Kami-Sama.

Rev. Matsutaro Yasutake behaved in such a reverent manner as if there were some highly regarded people at the altar, like the emperor. While Rev. Fumio Yasutake was not that much aware of the presence of Kami-Sama at that given situation. It could be the mindset—awareness of Kami’s presence at any given situation, not just at the altar.

What Kami is can be demonstrated by how we behave in reflection of the perception we hold deep in our hearts about Kami.

I want to introduce a passage from Naiden found in the Kyoten Scriptures that can be related to the subject of today’s speech.

Sato Norio related, “He deepened his faith and finally became one with Kami so that the words spoken by Ikigami Konko Daijin were the words of Kami. Rather than giving the Oharai Prayer, he used the time to speak to people.

It was exactly like the teaching, ‘In this faith you are saved not by chanting prayers, but by listening to the teachings.’ Thus, the Founder stopped chanting prayers and exclusively performed Toritsugi for the requests of people. We came to receive the blessings without needing any formal rituals between the Parent Kami and the Founder.

Requests made to Tenchi Kane no Kami through Toritsugi became the prayers of the Founder, Ikigami Konko Daijin. This practice was established while he was living.

The Founder always said, ‘In this faith you are not saved by chanting prayers. You will receive divine blessings by understanding, even if it is through conversations you have as you walk or as you sit on a ridge between the fields.’

This is related to the 61st Teaching of Selected Teachings of Konko Daijin (Konko Kyōso Gorikai), which states, ‘Konko Daijin speaks about unlimited divine blessings from Kami. If you receive blessings by practicing faith and then teach them with the same heart as Kami’s, you are truly practicing this faith. Passing on Konko Daijin’s words without changing their meaning and helping others to practice this faith will make Kami happy. This will also make you a kami. You should not consider yourself above Kami even if you become a kami.’

It also has the same meaning as the 68th Teaching of Selected Teachings of Konko Daijin, which states, ‘Do not consider it a hardship to go to worship during rain or strong winds. Enduring these hardships is training to receive virtue. No matter how diligently you may recite the words of prayer, it is equal to telling lies to Kami unless you do it with a genuinely sincere heart. When you worship, you need not clap your hands loudly. Kami can hear even a small sound. When you pray, you do not have to do it loudly or in a peculiar intonation. Pray as you would talk to others.’

We need to be careful not to simplify the rituals. The Founder conscientiously followed the rituals. If you have sincere faith in your heart, it should be reflected in your actions. Chanting Oharai prayers becomes unnecessary only after your virtue has reached the level of Kami’s virtue. [GIII:Naiden/ed. Satō, Norio:P1:6.11]

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 12.*
2. Heaven and Earth continue to live. Because Heaven and Earth are alive, all people are able to live. *III Jinkyū Kyogoroku 104*

Bulletin Board

July 2025

- 1 Tue -Monthly Svc. for Tenchi Kane no Kami-Sama (7:30 pm) 天地金乃神様 月例祭
-Shingyō Kikan period 6 am, 9 am and 7:30 pm prayers
- 13 Sun -Monthly Svc. for Ikigami Konko Daijin-

Sama (9 am) 生神金光大神様 月例祭
20 Sun -Monthly Mem. Service 月例霊祭 (9 am)
-Kangakusai 勸学祭 Back to School Svc

- Shingyo Kikan from July 1st to the 31st. We will have an intensive faith practice month. We will hold our daily prayers at 6 am, 9 am and 7:30 pm. Please feel free to join us for the daily prayers.
- Monthly Volunteer Activity at St. Francis The next activity will be on Friday, July 11 @ 10:30 am
- KMH Beach clean-up and BBQ event at Haleiwa Ali'i Beach Park on Saturday, July 12 from 10 am to 2 pm.
- KMH Kyōten Study Group via Zoom Voice of the Universe Join us on Wednesday, July 16 and 30 from 5 pm on ZOOM.
- Honouliuli 10th Anniversary Celebrations event at Wahiawa Church. We will have a public tour again on Saturday, August 16th from 10 am to about 11:30 am.

July Remembrance

Shimeno Iwasa	7/1/1966
May Shimao	7/30/2004
Masao Yoshihara	7/12/2002
Yasuo Hayashida	7/5/1998
Miyamoto Asa	7/23/1933
Rev. Yoshie Yoshino	7/21/2005
Randy Yamamoto	7/5/2014
Wesly Katsumi Ooyama	7/4/1981
Masae Baba	7/20/1987
Joseph (Kaoru's pet dog)	7/13/2016
Mary Elizabeth Valmoja	7/13/2022

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 published by Konkōkyō Theological Research Center in 1980. Many biographies about the life of the Founder Konkō Daijin exist. I would like to introduce this article for your reference in your pursuit of faith. An English translation was provided by Rev. Yasuhiro Yano. (continued from the previous issue)

Page 180-183 (continued)

Bunji should have had to fulfill any of the governmental regulations for his religious work. Kami intended Bunji to take actions to fulfill any of the

requirements for his work. But Kami was quite flexible about the matter and watched over the situation. Kami stated, "If the government did not allow the construction project, the shrine to be built would be given to anybody who wanted it." He also stated that if Kami entered the shrine, the world would turn dark. Kami did not care about any governmental authorities. In this manner, Kami showed His boundless presence. For humans, they needed religious facilities for their work; they should fulfill any of the governmental regulations; they needed certificates for their work from the government and society; they also had to provide a place of worship. Even though they failed to fulfill even one of those elements, they could hardly help people through their religious work. And they had to deal with many obstacles through their work. But Kami needs none of those elements or restrictions; Kami needs no religious facilities, like shrines; Kami needs nothing at all. Kami is boundless and is free of any government regulations.

The exhibited nature of Kami and reality could be likened to the relationship of Heaven and Earth. Kami stated, "It looks like Heaven and Earth, Ten-Chi." Kami stated that Heaven alone cannot be functional at all and is meaningless. It is the presence of Earth that makes Heaven function and gives meaning to Heaven. This is the mutual interdependent relationship between Heaven and Earth. The same is true for Earth. It is the presence of Heaven that functions and gives meaning to Earth. The statement, "Man is man because of Kami, Kami is Kami because of man," is the same in nature as the relationship between Heaven and Earth.

But Kami cannot manifest His boundless existence in the human world. Even if Kami manifests Himself in the human world, people cannot identify the presence of Kami through human-oriented perceptions. The "Toritsugi" is the only functional opening that can be connected to the infinite boundless existence of Kami. The shrine is intended to be the place to actualize the function of Toritsugi-Mediation that can help and guide people to deal with their day-to-day encounters in life. Through the boundless workings of Kami, people can sustain their lives and are guided to keep on living while dealing with many encounters in life.

In this manner, Kami helped Bunji to deal with the issues of getting official certification for his religious work by providing some fundamental knowledge about Kami, human beings, Toritsugi-Mediation, salvation, shrines, and so forth. It was the nature of Kami to try to help Bunji fulfill the intention of Kami's will by reminding him not to be satisfied only with the completion of the action of getting an

official certificate for his religious work and to overcome many difficult encounters.

Actions Aimed at Getting an Official Certificate

How did Bunji respond to the divine message of building a shrine for his religious work? Bunji initiated the construction of the shrine in this sequence. On January 4, 1864, a ceremony to begin the construction of the shrine was held. On January 10, an application for approval of the construction was submitted to the village office and was taken to the Aso Provincial Office. In April of the year, Motoemon and Uhei went to the Shirakawa Head Office and applied for the shrine's construction. The application was received and heard by Shinto Office officials Hayashi Yamato-no-kami and Abeta Bizen-no-kami. They were told, "The shrine may be built on the same property where the house is located." This was on April 9 (Oboegaki 13-3-3). But there was a period of inertia for some time.

Two years later, in October of 1866, Bunji sent a letter of inquiry about the construction project and received a letter from the Shirakawa Shinto Office. In April of 1868, Bunji got approval from the Village Office for the construction of the Konjin shrine. He took the letter and submitted the application for the construction to the Aso Provincial Office. During the same month, Bunji built a temporary shed for the construction project. The family members of the head carpenter lived at the gatehouse and started to work intermittently. In the process of approval for the new shrine from the Aso Provincial Office, they encountered difficult situations they never imagined. On August 9, Kami revealed, "Since the head carpenter is ill-hearted, he will not complete the construction of the shrine" (Oboe-cho 11-4). Eventually, the project came to an end. Contrary to this difficult situation, the activity to get the official certificate for Bunji's religious work showed some positive advancement.

In 1864, the Shirakawa Head Office of the Shinto Office sent Bunji the Ooharai Prayer Book, a document of approval for performing Shinto rites. On the day Bunji reported to the Shirakawa Head Shinto Office and initiated his training, he received the "Kazaori" (Shinto ceremonial head cap), "jooe" (ceremonial garment), and "shiro sashi-bakama" (ceremonial skirt). He was granted permission to perform Shinto rites. The response of the Office to Bunji's request could be an assurance that he had received an official certificate to engage in his religious work.

From this opportunity, those believers engaged in their religious work without any proper documents at

many places responded by enrolling at the institution to acquire the certificate needed for their religious work. Juemon Saito and Tomie Takahashi received certificates that allowed them to perform Shinto rites in January of 1885. Several believers in the area also acquired the certificate called "Shinpai Shiki Kyojo" in 1886.

In October of 1886, the Shirakawa Head Office of Shinto granted Bunji a one-rank higher status and allowed him to wear the "kanmuri" (head garment), "nuno saifuku" (cloth ceremonial garment), and "asagi sashinuki" (ceremonial skirt). He was also allowed to use the title of "Konko Kawachi." The Office gave him special consideration. If Yamabushi priests or other people tried to interfere with his religious work, they instructed Bunji to resolve any encounters through communication at the initial point. If they continued troubling Bunji, he was to record the address and name and report the issue to the Shirakawa Office. The Office would then take appropriate measures for Bunji to be able to engage in his religious work without worry. The Office granted him a guarantee for his religious work. Thereafter, those who caused trouble ceased to visit Bunji.

Uhei Hashimoto made a considerable contribution to Bunji in obtaining an official certificate for his religious work from the Shirakawa Head Office of Shinto. Uhei Hashimoto was a priest belonging to Nyukawa Kami Jinsha located in Yamato Yoshino, the southern part of Nara Prefecture. He was familiar with the procedures for getting in contact with the Shirakawa Head Office of Shinto. It could be assumed that Hashimoto was initiated into the religious practice started by Bunji around 1885, when Bunji received the message about the shrine construction.



Rev. Sachiko Yasutake and her daughter, Kyoko Sensei visit Hawaii to join the KMH Missionary Women's Society Seminar that was held on June 18th at the Honolulu Church. They also visited the Wahiawa Church on the 17th.