

Special Stories

NAIDEN

Speech by Satō Norio

DAY ONE

1 Introduction

Serious talks are harder on the listener than on the speaker. It wasn't easy to travel to Otani Village and receive the teachings of Konko Daijin. At times I was not able to stand up after sitting still for as long as five hours listening to teachings at the Hiromae. I believed that I would not receive divine blessings if I felt tired by sitting for so long after traveling twenty to thirty kilometers on foot. I considered it a blessing when I was not able to stand up.

² I would prefer that you not use words like “research of doctrine.” It is not research. I would rather use a word like “master.”

³ I would also like you to avoid using phrases like “ask a question,” and prefer that you use “consult with” or “ask for instructions.”

⁴ There were no written articles to read and learn about the Konko Faith during Konko Daijin's lifetime. A Guide to the Faith (*Omichi Annai*), a memo written by Shirakami Shin'ichirō, was published later.

⁵ There is no short cut to learning this faith. We gained the virtue of our faith step-by-step, much like the corns on the soles of our feet — from frequent visits to the Hiromae.

⁶ Today, people try to learn this faith quickly. This is not a bad approach. However, they gain only knowledge of the faith, and not necessarily divine virtue. Therefore, the number of those who have knowledge of the faith has increased, but the number of those who have divine virtue has not. People who have only knowledge of the faith cannot save others.

⁷ As we gained virtue, we gradually received precious teachings and revelations from Konko Daijin. Those who came to worship only to give thanks received limited teachings, even after coming to the Hiromae for three to five years. There are many of these so-called “ordinary” believers.

⁸ Konko Daijin tested people again and again before bestowing Kami’s teachings. Although many received Konko Daijin’s test, only a few people have received the revelation, “You are one in a thousand followers.”

⁹ The Admonitions (*Shinkai*), Instructions of the Faith (*Shinkun*), and Selected Teachings of Konko Daijin (*Konko Kyōso Gorikai*), are teachings handed down from the founder to the disciples, but it is important for people today to read these teachings as if they are receiving them directly from Konko Daijin.

¹⁰ The true meaning of this faith cannot be understood in only six months or so. If one gains divine virtue, the essence of the faith will be revealed to that person individually, regardless of his social standing, through his wholehearted faith in both Tenchi Kane No Kami and Konko Daijin. To gain virtue, one must develop the sincerity of one’s heart.

¹¹A young man who had fervent intentions following this faith came the other day and asked to receive teachings from me. I was busy at the time and could not talk with him. Fortunately, I had written an article about that and gave it to him to read. He finished reading it in five minutes and gave it back to me. People can read it in five minutes if they want. However, since I was the only one who knew and experienced what was written in that article, I would read it, think carefully, and meditate while recalling those days. I could sit there for hours reading the article. The young man, on the other hand, read it in five minutes and returned it to me. From this experience, I felt that I should reconsider giving teachings in written form. Until then I had thought that people would be moved to tears and captivated when they read my article.

¹²When you read articles written about the founder, have the feeling that you are meeting with Konko Daijin directly. Then you will gain the ability to deepen your faith. You may even feel deeply touched after hearing the words of an uneducated but virtuous man. We must all correct the manner in which we propagate or teach, otherwise, we will not be able to receive Kami's teachings.

¹³For example, the scholar Hirata Atsutane visited the grave site of the great teacher, Moto'ori, and asked to become his disciple. He then read Moto'ori's "Kojikiden" (an annotated book of "Kojiki", the mythical stories of old Japan). With this same spirit, I have read Motoda Eifu's books on ethics and Inoue Tetsujirō's work on oriental philosophy. Therefore, I respect both of them as my mentors.

¹⁴There is no picture, portrait, or wooden statue of Konko Daijin. This is because he did not allow them to be made, saying, “Don’t pay attention to my physical form.” Since the statue of Kurozumi Munetada was made, I asked Konko Daijin to have one made of himself. Fujii Tsunejirō and others also wanted that, but he would not allow it. If you put the eyebrows of Shōjin (Konko Asakichi) on the face of the first Superintendent of Konkokyo (Konko Hagio), it will closely resemble Konko Daijin’s face. He had thick, long eyebrows, and his forehead was slightly bald. He had a little rounder face than the first Superintendent.

¹⁵I would like to tell you more about the founder so that you will be able to visualize him. I want to let you see him for yourself. I am praying wholeheartedly and asking Konko Daijin for this.

¹⁶I will now talk about a subject on which I have been making factual surveys for a long time. This spring, I spoke about the founder’s life up to 1876. I will speak as before without regard to chronological order. If the date of a certain event is unknown, I will just describe it without reference to the date. I once spent half a year traveling to Bizen, Bitchū, Bingo, and Aki provinces making factual surveys in order to confirm a single date.

¹⁷The period in which Konko Daijin was still alive is considered the divine era of Konkokyo. I have called the accounts of this period, *Naiden*. I call the period after the founder passed away the human era.

2 The Significance of the Incense

Konko Daijin recited the Shingyō Buddhist Sutra. He also recited the traditional Rokkon Prayer (a prayer of Shugendo) and Ōharai Prayer of Shintoism. He recited these three different prayers, and then offered sticks of incense to his altar as Buddhists do. Because I had studied Shinto traditions, I wondered why he did this. I asked Konko Daijin about this while alone with him on a spring day in 1881.

² I asked, “Konko-Sama, why do you offer incense to Kami?” He then replied, “People say that one candle offered by the poor is the same as a thousand offered by the rich. There are some people who cannot offer even one candle. Kami will accept anything, whether it be a candle or incense. If a whole stick of incense cannot be offered, half of it will do. Kami will accept it like a whole candle. If even incense cannot be offered, offer a spark by striking the flint. Kami will accept it like a candle. There are people who can receive blessings even from the ashes of incense.”

³ I was deeply moved upon learning that it is wrong to think that those with sincerity need not make any kind of offering. I felt grateful that Kami receives offerings in the same way no matter how rich or poor people are. There is nothing more benevolent than this.

⁴ Konko Daijin stopped offering incense on July 11, 1883.

⁵ This faith spread in Osaka. Shirakami Shin'ichiro II, who just recently succeeded his father's faith, and Kondo Fujimori spread this faith there and many received divine blessings. However, officials of the Osaka Branch of the Shinto

Office felt it was difficult to officially recognize the faith and wanted to speak to Konko Daijin directly. It was decided that three Shinto missionaries, Kameda Kazumi, Yoshimoto Seiitsu, and Fukatsu Yachiho (though Fukatsu could not go), would travel to the Hiromae on July 11 to determine whether it was permissible to propagate this faith in Osaka. I informed Konko Daijin that the three were coming. He stopped offering incense from that day, leaving the metal lanterns he had been using as they were.

3 Toritsugi of the Village Deity Before There Were Disciples' Hiromaes

How did Konko Daijin make believers' requests come true when there weren't any hiromaes in other districts to perform toritsugi?

² When Konko Daijin became an Ikigami in Otani Village of Bitchū Province, many people came to worship upon hearing of his miraculous abilities. Many of them asked Konko Daijin, "Because we live far from here, we are unable to come here to worship frequently. Please send us a person who will perform toritsugi in our area."

³ Konko Daijin offered a prayer and then revealed, "Those who live afar need not come here when they need to pray right away. You should go to your village shrine and make a request to your village deity for toritsugi. That deity will relay the request here." I heard this several times. So the village shrines might be considered the place where propagation first began.

⁴ Such broad-mindedness of Konko Daijin can also be seen through one of the teachings in the Instructions of the Faith (*Shinkun*), “Do not look down on other deities when revering the kami whom you solely believe in.”

⁵ One time, I heard that Konko Daijin had told a person, “Your request has already been relayed to me by your village deity. Kami is now giving you the blessings.” All the village shrines were the hiromaes of Konko Daijin’s torit-sugi at that time.

⁶ Other religions make themselves look good by criticizing other religions. So there are great differences between this faith and other religions. In any case, I have no difficulties when I entrust my life to Kami. Even when I pray to other deities, my faith toward Konko Daijin never wavers. This is why this faith is exceptional.

⁷ When we made an official application to establish our church in 1885, the Shinto Office had made it a requirement that the village deities be deified next to the main Kami of the religion in question. At that time, we did not have any difficulty in following the regulation. Without Konko Daijin’s teachings, however, it would have been very difficult. Later, upon becoming free from Shinto control, we decided to delete the village deities from our bylaws, keeping only Ikigami Konko Daijin and Tenchi Kane No Kami as our deities. This is not because we treated the village deities lightly, nor did we leave out these deities. We decided to worship the village deities at separate altars from Tenchi Kane No Kami and Konko Daijin. Knowing these facts, you will un-

derstand how this faith was opened through the profound plans of Kami.

4 Mediation for Believers With Divine Titles

Divine titles were prohibited in September 1870 in accordance with the government's policies on religion. Until then, divine names were given to certain believers.

² When a believer with a divine name came to worship, his real name and age were not used in Konko Daijin's prayers. Konko Daijin would go in front of the altar and give prayers such as, "Now, Nishiroku Konshō Myōjin (Takahashi Tomie) has come to worship," or "Matsunaga Konshi Daimyōjin (Asai Iwazō) has come to worship." This practice created an atmosphere of deep respect. There were many who received divine names. For other people, he would give prayers with just their Chinese zodiac signs and ages.

³ There are two kinds of divine names, those bestowed by Konko Daijin, and those bestowed by his disciples.

⁴ Disciples who had a *hiromae* usually received a divine name. As a result, they were held in greater esteem than ministers of today.

5 The Service Days

Konko Daijin used *goennichi* (special day for Kami) instead of *gosaijitsu* (festival day). However, an exception was the tenth of the month, which he called *omatsuribi* (service day).

² At the time Konko Daijin was practicing faith, our religion was obliged to accept the rituals of the Shirakawa sect, one

of the major Shinto schools. Konko Daijin used Shintoistic words on some days and Buddhist words on other days. He used Buddhist words like *goennichi*, and offered incense in a Buddhist manner. Because of this, one day when there were no other worshippers in the Hiromae, I asked, “Konko-Sama, is your faith an orthodox or syncretistic Shinto sect?”

³ “Let me see,” he replied. He turned to the altar to inform Kami of my visit and ask Kami my question. He soon revealed, “Year of the Dragon from Goryō Village (Satō Norio), Konko Daijin knows neither orthodox nor syncretistic sects of Shintoism. Kami only lets him tell people the principles of Heaven and Earth.” I was deeply moved.

⁴ After his prayer, Konko Daijin said to me, “I don’t know anything. Kami teaches me in this manner.” When I received this revelation, I trembled in reverential awe. But Konko Daijin was very calm while he relayed the revelation, like a sea without a single ripple.

⁵ Kami’s will in this revelation (which concerns the laws of Heaven and Earth) can also be seen in the seventieth teaching of the Selected Teachings of Konko Daijin (*Konko Kyōso Gorikai*). It states, “Since humans are the master of all living things, they must understand all things and practice faith which is consistent with the principles of the universe.”

⁶ Before receiving this teaching, I did not have enough virtue and had doubts about the essence of this faith. I had wondered what I should focus on when practicing faith.

With these words, however, my mind became clear. My gratitude and happiness were indescribable.

⁷ For me, as a young man, there was nothing more wonderful than having been freed of doubt. This made me feel that this faith was unprecedented and unparalleled, and that it was a sacred faith taught by Kami. From that time on, I never strayed and my faith deepened so I could move one step closer to Kami.

⁸ Konko Daijin did not immediately reply when someone asked him a question. This, of course, was not true in trivial matters, but if it was a question about this faith, he would turn to the altar, pray to Kami and receive a revelation. Upon receiving revelations, Konko Daijin was glad and looked genuinely happy. They were very clear teachings.

⁹ The revelations from Kami were always brief and clear. However, the teachings by Konko Daijin would naturally take longer.

¹⁰ Revelations were spoken by the founder while he prayed and faced the altar. Teachings were conveyed while he faced sideways to the altar after coming back to his desk.

6 Konko Daijin Stopped Giving the Ōharai Prayer

Initially, Konko Daijin chanted both the Rokkon Prayer and the Shingyō Sutra. Both were recited the way that was customary in the founder's local area.

² In 1864, the Shirakawa Head Office of Shinto Affairs sent him an Ōharai Prayer Book with a document of approval for performing Shinto rites. After a short time, the founder be-

gan to chant the Ōharai Prayer following the Rokkon Prayer. Then, without our noticing it, he stopped chanting the Rokkon Prayer and used only the Ōharai Prayer.

³ When I visited the Hiromae in the spring of 1881, the founder had also stopped chanting the Ōharai Prayer. The founder's tone while giving the Ōharai Prayer had been as clear as the ring of a golden bell. He stopped giving the prayer and only prayed for the requests made by people. I was surprised that he did not give the Ōharai Prayer and asked the Founder about it one day when there were no other worshippers in the Hiromae. (Sometimes there were a few people at the Hiromae, and sometimes there were none.) I asked, "Konko-Sama, why aren't you chanting the Ōharai Prayer anymore?" The founder replied, "Kami instructed, 'It is the same whether or not you give the Ōharai Prayer. Have people listen to your teachings instead.' This is why I stopped giving the prayer."

⁴ I have the following thoughts about what he said to me that day. The founder received the divine status of becoming one with heaven and earth on October 26, 1870. However, because of his prudent nature, he said, "If even I, Konko Daijin, go astray, Kami will dismiss me." He always kept this as his guiding principle.

⁵ 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 Ōharai Prayer, he used the time to speak to people.

⁶ 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.

⁷ Requests made through Ikigami Konko Daijin to Tenchi Kane No Kami became the prayers of the Founder. This practice was established while he was living.

⁸ Konko Daijin 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.”

⁹ This is related to the sixty-first teaching of the Selected Teachings of Konko Daijin (*Konko Kyōso Gorikai*), which states, “Konko Daijin speaks about the unlimited divine blessings from Kami. If you receive blessings by practicing faith and then sincerely give teachings to others with the same heart as Kami’s, you too can walk the true way of faith. Passing on Konko Daijin’s words without changing their meaning and helping others to practice true faith will please Kami. This will make you a kami. You should not consider yourself above Kami, even if you become a kami.”

¹⁰ It also has the same meaning as the sixty-eighth teaching of the Selected Teachings of Konko Daijin, which states, “Do not hesitate 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 genuine sincerity. 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.”

¹¹We need to be careful not to simplify the rituals. Konko Daijin conscientiously followed the rituals. If you have sincere faith in your heart, it should be reflected in your actions. Chanting prayers becomes unnecessary only after your virtue has reached the level of Kami’s virtue.

7 The Meaning of “Both Sides Coming Together”

I will speak about this matter in detail because it is an everlasting principle of this faith. The founder’s consideration for the future was so deep that it is beyond description.

² On several occasions, devout believers tried to convince the Founder of the necessity to receive official recognition for this faith because the government prohibited propagation of unauthorized faiths.

³ The Founder did not let them seek such recognition and repeatedly told them, “It is not the time yet.” Therefore, nothing could be done about the situation.

⁴ The faith spread quickly from Okayama west to Suō Province, but relatively slowly to the east.

⁵ During the cholera epidemic in 1879, Shirakami Shin’ichirō started toritsugi in Osaka and many people were saved. Consequently, many people embraced this faith in a short period of time. Even after his death, the faith continued

to spread through the efforts of his son, Shirakami Shin'ichirō II. His disciple, Kondō Fujimori, also propagated this faith and saved many people.

⁶ I will tell you how they started to propagate this faith in Osaka. First, they opened their hiromaes as branch shrines of the Osaka Shinto Branch Office. The worshippers increased day by day. Problems arose in the Osaka Shinto Branch Office because each believer the officials saw had a different interpretation and method of practicing the faith. Mr. Kameda and Mr. Yoshimoto, who were both officials of the Shinto Branch Office, decided to clarify this situation by visiting the Founder in order to understand the basic principles of the faith.

⁷ Shirakami and Kondō went to the Hiromae on June 9, 1883 and asked the Founder when it would be convenient to meet and discuss the situation. They explained the situation in Osaka to him, and asked for permission to discuss it with me. The Founder offered prayers and then said, "You should go and talk to Satō Norio in Goryō Village."

⁸ I was at home in Goryō Village on June 9. Since the tenth was a service day, I asked Kami if I could go to Konko Dai-jin's Hiromae. I received the divine revelation, "There are people coming from Osaka, therefore, wait here instead of attending the Hiromae." I waited, but no one came. The lunch hour passed, and still no one came. Just when I started to think that I must have misunderstood Kami's revelation, a person with a message from Kondō Fujimori and Shirakami Shin'ichirō II came. The message, which I received around four o'clock said, "We would like to visit you soon. May

we?” I replied to the messenger, “Tell them I am waiting and to please come.” They both came to my home around five o’clock.

⁹ Their party, which included Dōgan Nui, Toraya Kichibe’e, Ōba Kichitarō, and possibly one more person, stayed at a nearby inn. Only Kondō and Shirakami came to my home. Shirakami said, “We rode a ricksha from Otani Village to Kasaoka Village. We stopped at the Nakari Inn and then tried to hire another ricksha, but the prices the ricksha man quoted were too expensive. He wanted to charge us five *rin* more than what we offered, so we came here on foot. I suffered from my beriberi, but still Kondō forced me to walk.”

¹⁰ I asked, “Why have you come here?” They answered, “We have come here today with Konko Daijin’s permission to ask for your advice. The faith has spread in Osaka, but we have been told that we cannot continue our propagation unless three people from the Shinto Branch Office (Kameda and others) meet and talk to the Founder directly. They will soon be going to Otani Village, so we came to get your advice on how to prepare for that.” I asked, “When are they coming?” They replied, “On the eleventh of next month (July, 1883). We would like you to be prepared for that.”

¹¹ They had met with much interference from the Osaka Shinto Office. There were so many restrictions on what they could say or do, that they were prevented from doing anything without official permission from the government. The three of us discussed various things that night. It was just after my son Kazuo (the first son of Satō Norio) was born. We talked over grilled dried sardines and sake. By the time we

noticed that the light of the lamp had gone out, it was already dawn.

¹²We decided to prepare for the meeting. Kondō and Shirakami returned to Otani Village on June 11, and, after telling the Founder about our decision, they went back to Osaka. I heard later that the Founder seemed to be very relieved at that time.

¹³While attending the Hiromae on the twelfth of June, I told the Founder about how the meeting went. He was pleased and said, "Both sides have come together."

¹⁴I told him about the preparations for the visit by the officials from Osaka in July. At that time, Sanjin (Konko Hagio) told me, "Konko Daijin is happy with what you discussed with the two ministers from Osaka. In the past, several people have come to help him get official recognition for the faith, but this time he has said, 'Both sides have come together,' and 'The time has come.'"

¹⁵The "both sides" Konko Daijin refers to are not the upper and the lower classes of social position. What he meant was the west and east, based on Otani Village, Bitchū Province, as the center.

¹⁶The faith spreading in all directions is what is done by people. The Founder told us to be unprejudiced in using people and to have a central core that is broad in acceptance.

¹⁷There are two people in the East and two in the West. Konshō Myōjin (Takahashi Tomie) has always supported me. However, since society would not accept a woman as a representative, I asked the Founder to use me.

¹⁸It was in this way that the selection process for leaders of the organization was established.

¹⁹The church could have been established as an organization earlier. On June 20, 1878, Sanjin (Konko Hagio) became a priest of the Kamo Shrine (the village shrine of Otani) and in July 1879, he was ordained as an assistant priest by the Shinto Office. The church organization could have been established at that time, but was not. The founder waited for the right people to join together. The older believers had a very difficult time propagating this faith, but endured those difficulties and waited patiently for the right time. Even if I tried to explain more, there are just too many memories for me to express my true feelings.

²⁰In any case, I prepared myself by reading books I had bought for this meeting with the Shinto priests. Since I had to know the laws of the Shinto Organization, I bought the current edition of *The Priest Handbook* and read it thoroughly. The books I ordered came in early, which was perfect timing.

²¹On July 12, the two officials arrived, accompanied by Shirakami and Kondō. We met at the Kibinoya Inn.

²²The visitors said that Kanayamahiko No Mikoto, the deity of the Nangū Shrine in Mino Province, could be installed at the Hiromae so that it could be officially recognized as a branch shrine of the Nangū Shrine. Before the visitors saw the Founder, I told him about their proposal.

²³The founder said, “This Kami is different. Please tell them that it is not possible.”

²⁴Having purified their bodies, the visitors were taken to the founder without being told of what he had said. Then they told the founder their proposal. The founder merely replied, “Thank you, I will let Satō Norio speak to you about this matter.” After returning to the inn, they both said, “It’s incredible, just incredible.” Then I explained in detail what the Founder had told me earlier. Both of them just said, “He is a great religious person.” We treated the Shinto priests well, and they returned to Osaka accompanied by Shirakami and Kondō.

²⁵The proposal made by the visitors from Osaka was very kind, but the founder did not accept it. If he had been swayed by kindness at that time, the Konkokyo of today would not exist.

²⁶From that time on, Shirakami, Kondō and I had frequent meetings. Once we reached a decision on one subject, we would immediately present it to the founder before proceeding to the next item. We spent the summer in this way.

DAY TWO

8 Introduction

Today I will talk about extremely important matters. What I am about to tell you would normally be known only by a select few including the Chief Administrative Officer (Konko Iekuni). However, because the Chief Administrative Officer told me to let all the people know about these matters, I will take his words as an order from Konko Daijin and speak. Do not think that you will hear me speak about such things frequently.

² I did not take time to study these matters. These are things which I have known since the time our founder was alive. I am able to speak about these matters because he did not tell me that I shouldn't. There are also some things I cannot reveal because he told me, "This is just between you and me."

9 The Process Leading to Admonitions and Instructions of the Faith

In August of 1882, I went to see Yoshioka Noriaki, a priest of Nunakuma Shrine of Tomo Town. I carried a letter of introduction written by Nagaoka Noburu of Hirano Village, Yasuna County, which is the same county we live in. (Nagaoka Noburu is the principal of an elementary school and a priest. He helped me become a minister, and also helped our faith in many ways. He was also the vice-president of the Shinto Branch Office of Yasuna County.) I said to Yoshioka, "There is a living kami named Ikigami Konko Daijin in Otani Village of Bitchū Province." After explaining his teachings briefly, I continued, "I am a believer of his. I would like to establish this faith as an independent religion and ask for your help." Yoshioka then replied, "Do you have doctrines? It is possible to establish your faith, but it depends upon the doctrines."

² Because I did not understand the word "doctrines," I asked him, "What are doctrines?" He said, "Don't you have written teachings?" I replied, "No, we don't. But we do have revelations which we have received from Kami daily."

He said, "Please write them down as organized articles of faith and show them to me. Let's talk again after I have read them." I returned home asking for his help in the future.

³ The next day, I went to Konko Daijin's Hiromae and told him what took place. He said, "It does not matter whether this faith becomes independent or not, as long as people can be saved."

⁴ In 1876, a government official gave Konko Daijin permission to help people by delivering his teachings at the Hiromae. However, other hiromaes had a hard time. I told the founder, "Things will be fine as long as you are living. But after you die, people will think that this faith is temporal unless we have some written teachings."

⁵ Konko Daijin then turned toward the altar to pray about this matter and soon received the revelation, "It is better to write down the teachings of Kami."

⁶ Konko Daijin was very pleased and said, "Kami has given us permission." I would like all of you to understand how happy he was at that time.

⁷ I went to the office and told this to Konko Sanjin (Konko Hagio), who was also very pleased.

⁸ There were not many teachings to write down in 1882. However, beginning in January of 1883, Konko Daijin asked me to write down many teachings which I transcribed in my faltering penmanship. This is how Admonitions (*Shinkai*) and Instructions of the Faith (*Shinkun*) were written.

⁹ After I transcribed a teaching, I would show it to Konko Sanjin. We combined these with those transcribed by Konko

Sanjin, forming the present teachings. This was the start of the preparations for the independence of our religion.

¹⁰Yoshioka Noriaki eventually became an officer of the Department of the Interior in Tokyo. Since we were not well-educated and knew virtually nothing about how to become an independent religion, Yoshioka acted on our behalf and assisted us in many ways. Konko Daijin prayed to Kami, and we soon received Kami's permission to prepare for our religious independence. We were very grateful.

10 Konko Daijin's Concerns in 1882 and 1883

I heard that Konko Daijin began serving Kami day and night right after receiving the Divine Call, and that for some time he had one meal a day. He rose early in the morning to serve at the Hiromae, and many people came one after another. Believers came to the Hiromae in a steady stream from very early in the morning until late at night. Because of this, he had a single evening meal each day for a long time.

² However, Kami instructed Konko Daijin to have breakfast before serving at the Hiromae, and from that time he started to have breakfast before going to the Hiromae. At the age of sixty, he was instructed by Kami to serve at the Hiromae from sunrise to sunset. However, this instruction concerned only his time to be spent talking to believers.

³ In late autumn of 1882, Konko Daijin began giving us the important teachings of this faith, usually at night. For example, one summer night in 1883, I arrived at the Hiromae between twelve midnight and one o'clock in the morning. I took off my straw sandals, entered the Hiromae, went to the

kekkaï mediation seat and said, “Hello. It’s Satō Norio from Goryō Village. I have come to worship.” The founder replied from the next room, and immediately opened the sliding door. He had not been sleeping, just sitting quietly in the room.

⁴ He said, “I am glad that you came,” and then proceeded to give me teachings one after another.

⁵ After a while the founder told me, “It will soon be dawn. Please get some rest.” I thanked him and returned to the Kibinoya Inn. The important teachings were imparted this way during the night.

⁶ They were conveyed to us during the autumn of 1882 and in 1883.

⁷ If you think about what I have just told you, you will understand the words of Konko Daijin that say, “This faith will not vanish even after Konko Daijin disappears.”

⁸ Konko Daijin experienced many hardships from 1881 because of various problems in starting the propagation in Osaka. Expressing it with common words, it was mentally stressful. I think this will help you understand how much concern the founder had for delivering the teachings to us during 1882 and 1883.

⁹ Many founders of religions have followed paths similar to this. The very essence of their faith is handed down late in their lives.

11 Revelations and Possessions

There is a fundamental difference between the revelations

that Konko Daijin received and the shamanistic possessions that others always talk about.

² In recent trials involving possessed persons, the lawyers sometimes plead that their clients are mentally deranged and call for doctor's diagnoses. They do this on the grounds that people who are possessed are in a state of unconsciousness and are therefore not responsible for their actions.

³ Konko Daijin's revelations are totally different. Since the beginning of this faith, Kami's messages have been received by devoted believers; first with hand divinations, then in their hearts, and then through their own voices. Finally, when they had deepened their faith enough, they receive revelations from Kami.

⁴ Konko Daijin would call out the year of birth of the person attending the Hiromae and then say, "Listen well to what Kami teaches."

⁵ Konko Daijin always felt fully responsible for the revelations, so he received the following revelation in 1882, "The revelations will be given only while Konko Daijin is alive." After he passed away, revelations were still received at four or five hiromaes, but soon the revelations ended.

12 The Main Teachings of Konko Daijin

The Founder conveyed the main teachings of this faith anytime from morning to night, so we transcribed at all times from morning to night. After being in Otani Village for quite a long time, on September 8, 1883, which was August 8 according to the lunar calendar, I said to the founder, "Each

faith has essential core teachings. I would like to know what the essence of this faith is.” The founder immediately answered, “There are nine significant points,” and continued in the following manner,

² “The first three are:

1. Directions
2. Food restrictions
3. *Fujō*- I write *Fujō* with characters meaning ‘not attained’ instead of ‘not pure’.

³ “The second three are:

4. Virtue of wishes
5. Divine virtue (long life)
6. Human virtue (being revered by others).

⁴ “And the last three are:

7. Kami
8. The government
9. Parents.”

⁵ I listened well to these points and expressed my deep appreciation. Konko Daijin remained silent for a short time and seemed very calm and peaceful. I can vividly recall how radiant, but also how tired, he appeared at that time.

⁶ After imparting these points, he looked exhausted. These were the final teachings for me. If you carefully read these nine items, you will understand the sequence of the development of our faith, and the original source of Admonitions (*Shinkai*) and Instructions of the Faith (*Shinkun*).

⁷ I have something for which I must apologize to the Founder. While I was transcribing Admonitions and Instructions of the Faith, I asked him, “You have given us teachings continuously one after another, and I wonder how many there are in all?” He said, “Let me see, there must be a little over a hundred.” Because of our shortcomings, we transcribed only eighty-two while he was alive. If I add these nine items, that will make it ninety-one teachings. It was our fault that there are less than one hundred.

⁸ I, Satō Norio, wanted to keep this a secret for the rest of my life, however, the Chief Administrative Officer (Konko Iekuni) told me to tell everyone about it. I, therefore, took it as an order from Konko Daijin, and have spoken to you about it today. These notes that I hold in my hand are faded, but I can still clearly read the words I transcribed at that time.

⁹ When I told Konko Daijin that I had to leave because I had been away from home for so long, he said, “Since it is still hot, ride a ricksha home. You should not get tired.” I declined his offer because I was young and high-spirited, but as I did so, Fujii Kura came to the front of the Hiromae and said to me, “The ricksha has come, so hurry.” I first dropped by the Kibinoya Inn and then rode the ricksha home feeling uncomfortable because it was too good for me. When I got to the Akabachi district (about four kilometers from Otani Village), I told the ricksha man, “Please go back,” but he did not listen to me. He replied, “It is Konko Daijin’s request. I will accompany you to Yōsuna Village (about twelve kilometers from Otani Village).” When we

were at the banks of Shinjō (about eight kilometers from Otani Village), I told him again to return, but he did not listen.

¹⁰He would not change his mind even when I said, “I will explain what happened to Konko Daijin on my next visit.” Finally I just got off the ricksha and told him I wouldn’t move another inch. Then the ricksha man left, after telling me, “I feel sorry for Konko Daijin who asked me to bring you to Yōsuna Village.” It had been only a eight kilometer ride but it felt much longer. Rather than feeling grateful, I felt undeserving.

¹¹This was the last time we saw Konko Daijin sitting at the Hiromae.

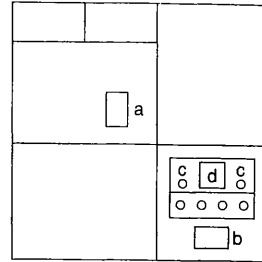
13 Before and After Konko Daijin Passed Away

Because I have already talked about how the last and most important teachings of the founder were conveyed, I am sure you can clearly imagine what Konko Daijin was like.

² As I mentioned earlier, I served at the hiromae of Goryō Village after riding on the ricksha on my way home. I was a little tired by then.

³ While I was sleeping on the evening of September 29, which is August 29 on the lunar calendar, I saw the founder in a dream. He said, “I, Konko Daijin, have served this faith for a long time, and now Hagio should take over.” I replied, “I will make sure that this faith goes well.” After that, an altar like that of the following diagram appeared.

- a. *Kekkai* mediation desk
- b. Place where the founder prayed
in the dream
- c. Evergreen branch with white
paper hangings
- d. Altar for the founder's *mitama*
spirit



⁴ Konko Daijin wore a new white kimono and a crested black *haori* half-coat (he usually did not wear *hakama*, formal men's skirt), and prayed facing the altar for his *mitama* spirit. When I opened my eyes, he would disappear, and when I closed my eyes, he would appear again.

⁵ I thought this unusual and woke my wife, Teru. I told her about my dream and asked her to make preparations to go to the Hiromae. I went to the hiromae of Nyūta Village (Seto Renzō's hiromae) at daybreak. I told Seto Renzō about what had happened and then went to Nishiroku Village (Takahashi Tomie's hiromae) to tell Myōjin about it. She told me, "A believer went to the Hiromae of Otani Village yesterday and told me, 'Konko Daijin left the *kekkaï* mediation desk yesterday and Hagio was serving there. I could not see Konko Daijin.' However, I have still not gone to the Hiromae." The two of us then hurried to the Hiromae and found Hagio serving there. He said to us, "At the evening prayers on the twenty-seventh, Konko Daijin said, 'Konko Daijin has served this faith for a long time and Hagio should take over.' Then he stopped performing toritsugi mediation at the Hiromae."

⁶ What I saw in my dream at the hiromae of Goryō Village was real; I was deeply impressed by Kami's concern. While I offered a silent prayer, Hagio informed Konko Daijin that the two of us had come.

⁷ Konshō Myōjin went to the west side of the house, silently saw Konko Daijin resting through the window, and then came back to the Hiromae. I wanted to go see him too, but since Konshō Myōjin had been given the special privilege to sit opposite Konko Daijin and I had not, I did not feel it would be appropriate to do so.

⁸ At that time, Hagio told us, "Please do not tell others and keep this a secret." Both of us said, "We understand, please take care of him," and we returned to Nishiroku Village. I will not say what was on our minds at that time.

⁹ Konshō Myōjin later told me, "Konko Daijin was resting peacefully on his back, but his face was thin." We discussed several things in Nishiroku Village until midnight. I wanted to tell the two disciples in Osaka (Shirakami Shin'ichirō II and Kondō Fujimori) about the founder, but I did not. I dropped by Nyūta Village to tell Seto Renzō about what had happened, and then returned to Goryō Village.

¹⁰ I offered prayers and thought about the future of this faith. I felt grateful for receiving the eighty-two teachings, and then the other nine teachings with Hagio, the successor. Since I had received these teachings, I felt extremely confident about the future of our faith.

¹¹ Still, I felt sad and went to the Hiromae on October 3. Hagio was serving and said, "Konko Daijin has been rest-

ing. There has been no change in his condition.” I spoke to him in an extremely low voice. Hagio told Konko Daijin, who was resting in the next room, that I had come.

¹²There were no other worshippers when I was at the Hiromae on both September 30 and again on October 3. When I went back to Nishiroku Village on the third, Konshō Myōjin told me that she had visited the Hiromae on the first to see Konko Daijin. We continued talking all through the night about faith, and I returned home on the fourth. I offered prayers everyday feeling overwhelmed with the memories of the past, and thinking about the future of the faith over and over again.

¹³When the founder offered prayers on January 1, 1883, he had received the following revelation, “This year, Konko Daijin will suffer from a critical disease.” That summer, the founder looked slightly weak, and on July 17, I asked him, “Konko-Sama, how long are you going to live and save people?” He replied, “I wish I could live forever, but with a physical form, I sometimes feel pain and think I cannot fully save people.” I then realized that because Konko Daijin gained virtue in the latter part of his life, he could not spread the divine virtue to save as many people as he wished in his physical form.

¹⁴This is the same as the teaching which says, “After my physical form disappears, I, Konko Daijin, will go wherever I am asked.”

¹⁵When Kataoka Jiroshirō went to the Hiromae on July 2 of the same year, the founder said to him, “Kami told me,

‘Start a one hundred day training period from today. When it is finished, the training of Konko Daijin will be complete.’”
The day this training was completed was September 9 on the lunar calendar, which was one day prior to the day the founder passed away.

