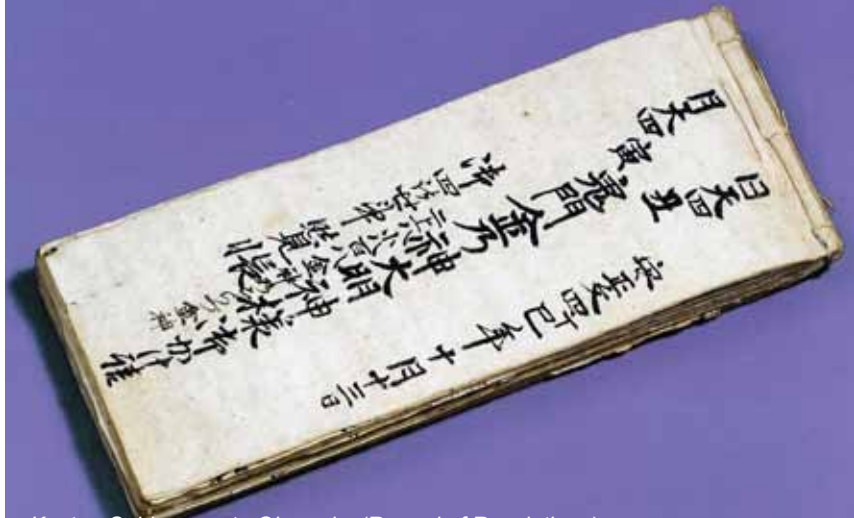




April, 2013

No.76



Kyoten Oshirase-goto Oboe-cho (Record of Revelations):
The Founder's self-written revelations he received from Tenchi Kane No Kami

Welcoming the 130th Anniversary of the Founder's Passing

Let us Live the Way of Kami and People

October 10, 2013 marks the 130th Anniversary of our Founder Konko Daijin's passing. To commemorate this anniversary, services, gatherings, and seminars are being held everywhere, throughout the Konko community. Let us practice faith with a renewed heart and make this a truly remarkable year for our Konko Faith.

When the Founder "Met" Kami

199 years ago, the Founder was the second son born to a family of farmers, in a quiet village in southwest Okayama Prefecture. At age twelve he was adopted by Mr. & Mrs. Kumejiro & Iwa Kawate of Otani Village, two villages away from his birth place.



When he was twenty-three years old, his adoptive father passed away and he inherited the family estate. That year he married eighteen-year-old Tose Furukawa, a childhood friend. He worked diligently and increased the family fortune. By the time he was forty years old, his household was considered one

of the most prosperous in the village.

While the Founder experienced



success, he also experienced sadness and misfortune, such as the death of family members and oxen. The villagers spread rumors that he incurred "The Wrath of Konjin." Eventually, he contracted a life-threatening illness.

This crisis occurred at the end of April in 1855, when he was forty-two years old. He was suddenly stricken with an illness diagnosed as untreatable and was near death.

Doctors gave up on him, as there appeared no hope for recovery. In desperation, the family members found

some hope through prayers to dieties.

When Tose's younger brother Jiro Furukawa, an ascetic mountain priest of *Shugendo*, offered a prayer for the Founder's complete recovery, Jiro became possessed by a deity and accused the Founder of committing irreverences against a fearful deity, Konjin during his house construction project.



Responding to the possessed Jiro's words, the Founder's father-in-law adamantly argued, "The 'Directions' were checked before the construction." While lying on his sickbed when he heard this conversation, the Founder felt as though his heart were being pierced.

He had conscientiously followed the “Days and Directions” instructions. However, after hearing this divine message, he became aware that he had committed irreverences against Kami. From his bed came these words from his heart, “I am just an ordinary person so I did not know which direction I was irreverent. I do not think it is enough to merely check the “Days and Directions.” He apologized to the deity as he made up his mind to accept any punishment Konjin would give him even if it were death.

Kami took notice of the Founder’s sincere attitude, and from this time on Kami’s true form began to be revealed – that of Kami loving each person as Kami’s precious child. Following this critical illness, the Founder was allowed to begin living a life together with Kami, adhering to Kami’s every instruction. Thus, Kami’s trust in the Founder grew deeper and deeper.

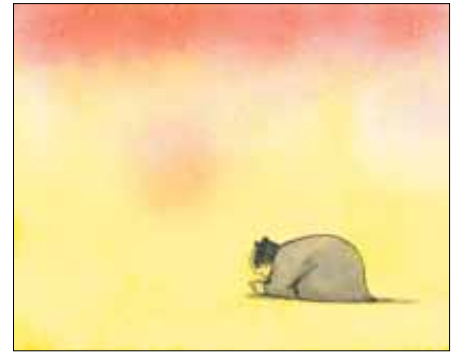
A Faith that Saves the Modern World

In the fall of 1859, four years after the Founder’s critical illness, he received this request from Tenchi Kane No Kami; “There are many people who have many problems. Help these people by performing Mediation. This will help

Kami and save people.” The Founder accepted this request, and converted his house into a Mediation hall. There he sat all day in front of the Kami Altar and dedicated his entire life to Mediation. He prayed to Kami for the happiness and salvation of those who suffered, and conveyed Kami’s wish to people. Through this sacred work of Mediation, a world in which both Kami and people became happy, was realized and spread.

During the Founder’s time, Japan experienced rapid modernization. People were caught in the middle of big waves of social reform based on Western rationalism. For the people suffering from the rapid and violent waves of modernization, the Founder admonished them to stop their human-centered way of life, to refrain from relying so much on human knowledge and power, and instead, showed them a way of life to embrace and rely completely on Tenchi Kane No Kami, Divine Parent of Heaven and Earth.

The Founder passed away in 1883. It has been 130 years since he left his physical form. Throughout these 130 years, as the Divine Mediator in his eternal spiritual form, he has continued to manifest the workings of Ikigami Konko Daijin’s Toritsugi Mediation to



save people, just as he had done when he was alive. This sacred work has been handed down through the generations, to the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and current Konko-Samas. And many followers, have prayed for, saved and guided others, so that the Faith has spread to various parts of the world.

The Faith that the Founder taught is universal, transcends time and place, and it offers salvation to suffering people. It guides people experiencing hardships to a way to overcome them. It also urges us to reconsider the human-centered way of life based on modern values that cause environmental destruction, religious conflicts, and other negative outcomes.

In this special commemorative year, let us share our joy of living this Way of Faith with our friends, community, and the entire world!

Artwork by Mr. Hirokazu Nagano.

Delivering the Face to Faith by e-mail

“Face to Faith” is now available through e-mail. The Konkokyo International Center (KIC) prints its “Face to Faith” newsletter and distributes it through the mail. KIC also delivers its newsletter by PDF file, via e-mail. Color pictures are sharper and



clearer. And through this electronic means, we are doing our share in preserving our natural resources. Please try it. If you would like to receive your newsletter by e-mail, please contact us at kic@konkokyo.or.jp.

From Kyoten

Konko-Sama always prayed, “Even if I were punished and my body was torn limb from limb, or if I were publicly exposed in villages and at street corners, or if my house was covered with grass, I wouldn’t mind at all. When the people of the world pray to Ikigami Konko Daijin with a sincere and single-heart, please fulfill whatever requests they have.”
(GORIKAI II: Unknown 7)



My Sincere Expression of Gratitude

By Reverend Jin Koo Lee (Konkokyo of Korea)



I greatly wish to thank the Founder.

Thanks to the Founder, we all can live healthy and faithful life altogether.

If the Founder had not existed, we would not have had Konkokyo and could not have received the divine blessing of Tenchi Kane No Kami.

I, who succeeded my father Reverend Wongyu Lee, was appointed to a minister of Konkokyo in 1998. I am dedicating myself to the sacred work of Mediation at Konkokyo of Korea, which I sincerely appreciate.

I have received three very significant blessings in my life. Through these experiences, I learned that if you pray to Kami whole-heartedly, you will surely receive a divine blessing. The Founder taught, “Kami-Sama will turn major misfortunes into minor ones and sweep them away.” Before, I doubted that Kami-Sama could sweep major misfortunes away from the beginning. But when I personally experienced major misfortune, it was swept away as I engaged in whole-hearted prayer. At that moment, I could understand the meaning of the teachings.

In 1998, I was almost blind because of high blood pressure. As I had an otherwise healthy body, I very earnestly prayed at the altar in my house. I asked for Mediation to the Spiritual Leader Konko-Sama regarding my health situation, and when I prayed for about six months, my eye sight gradually was restored.



Reverend Lee and believers. The photo was taken when Reverend Kaneo Kondo, Director of Outreach Department 2, made an official trip to Korea in December, 2012. The right side of Reverend Lee is Reverend Kondo.

Now I can read even small characters.

I truly received a big divine blessing.

Through this experience, I came to understand the teaching that major misfortune shall be turned into minor ones and they shall be swept away. At the same time, I deeply comprehended the teaching, “misfortunes are divine blessings in disguise.” Since then, I have received many blessings throughout my eighty-two year life. I am now devoting myself to the work of Konkokyo in good health.

When I pray to Kami, I recite the prayer in the Prayer Book very carefully because I learn Konkokyo through the Prayer Book and other books in order to convey these teachings to the people of Korea.

Now, I am proceeding with a translation of the book; *Konko Daijin—a Biography of the Founder*—from the Japanese language to Korean. My motivation for my translation efforts is based on the fact that I could fully understand the Founder and Konkokyo when I read this book for the first time. I thought that for propagation of Konkokyo, it is essential that the people in Korea read this book. The translation is not

finished yet, but I am doing my best to complete it as soon as I can, even a single day earlier than the planned deadline.

I would like to express gratitude to the Founder for my having ever received many divine blessings by becoming a believer in Konkokyo, and I wish to further devote myself to this sacred work.

The Faith Movement:

Let Us Live a Mutually Fulfilled Life with Kami

- Let us seek and receive Kami’s Words through Mediation
- Let us awaken to Kami’s blessings and unconditional love
- Let us live a joyful life of appreciation
- Let us pray for, help and guide one another, with a compassionate heart of Kami
- Let us truly live the way of Kami and all people – in mutual fulfillment

Announcement for the 130th Anniversary Grand Service

This year marks the 130th year since our Founder, Konko Daijin, passed away in 1883. The Grand Ceremony for the 130th Anniversary will be held at our Headquarters during the month of October, 2013. It will be celebrated with four Grand Ceremony service dates: October 3, 6, 10 and 13.

New Konko Church Established in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

by Reverend Seiji Akiyama (Konko Church of Mogi das Cruzes)

The Konko Church of Rio de Janeiro held its opening ceremony on January 13, 2013 with twenty-six people (thirteen of them Brazilian) attending. Reverend Masamichi Oishi and his wife started propagation five years ago by making outreach efforts together and mentoring Reverend Solange Santos, a Brazilian who is not Japanese. Reverend Oishi later returned to Japan to be the successor at the Konko Church of Saga, so Reverend Mitsuru Suenaga of the Birigui Church came to Rio de Janeiro.

Although propagation in Brazil has been mainly limited to Japanese people, many Brazilians visited the ceremony and the service was held Brazilian style. When seeing this, I felt that Kami's wish was to open the door for Konkokyo to enter their society.



Reverend Oishi said, "I'm so glad that Rio de Janeiro has an officially approved Konko Church and that Reverend Solange Santos started working as a minister with Reverend Mitsuru Suenaga. I am praying that the faith will spread through the world from Rio."

Reverend Suenaga said, "My family and friends supported without hesitation the preparation and completion of this ceremony. Mr. Jose-Carlos and his family sold us this house and accepted us even though they belong to another religion. I decided to accept everything when seeing their attitude and then began receiving more divine blessings. Please pray for us from now on."

Konkokyo is beginning to establish itself locally here in Brazil. I really felt that this ceremony was the first step for it.

Missionary Women Power!

by Reverends Reiko & Edna Yano (Konko Mission of Wahiawa)

The 4th Konko Missions in Hawaii (KMH) and Konko Churches of North America (KCNA) Joint Missionary Women's Society Seminar (MWSS) was held at the Konko Mission of Honolulu from January 25 to 27, 2013. The theme of our seminar was "Revealing the Faith of the Pioneer Ministers:



Missionary Women Power!" There were nineteen missionary women in attendance from North America, Hawaii, and Japan.

Reverend Reiko Yano, the KMH MWSS Chair, stated an important message in her greeting speech: "The Founder said, 'Women are closer to Kami. Faith starts with a woman.' We must strive to be unconditionally loving and caring people, just like Mother Earth."

Reverend Edna Yano (Hawaii) expressed her thankfulness for a female minister's devotion during WWII, which became a foundation of the current KMH.

Reverend Joanne Tolosa (North America) shared stories of the unconditional love and compassion of the pioneer

missionary women. She continues this by giving people a warm hug when they come to receive Toritsugi Meditation.

Reverend Yukari Yasui (Japan) talked about her mother, who contributed to her church by working as a school teacher on the side. Many of us shed tears while

listening to her story, as we also have been through dire financial situations, and received blessings.

We had many group sessions to discuss our faith, talking so long we even forgot to take breaks. We also enjoyed skits, songs, and presentations led by each group, and later exchanged *omiyage* gifts which were handmade with so much love.

The seminar ended with everyone in high spirits and looking forward to meeting again this October in Okayama, Japan for Ikigami Konko Daijin Grand Service - 130th Commemorative Year of the Founder's Passing.

Please see our website for the original version of this article.



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