

## The Value of Our Fundamental Resources: A Testimony

Louise Sasaki

(Ms. Sasaki and her husband Noriyuki founded Fellowship of Joy in 1985 and resides in New Jersey, USA)

I am so very grateful to be able to share this wonderful occasion with all of you today. I see many familiar faces of friends whom I look forward to catching up with and many new faces that I look forward to getting acquainted with. I know that you all join me in thanking the committee and staff who have worked so hard and long to organize this Forum, and for giving us this wonderful opportunity to share our thoughts and experiences in English here at Jiba for the very first time. On a personal note, my husband, I and my three children returned to Jiba every year for over 20 years to participate in the Children's Pilgrimage. Since my children are now all grown, it's difficult to coordinate our schedules. Thanks to this special occasion of the Forum, my family has once again all gathered together here in Jiba to say hello to Oyasama and give our thanks to God the Parent.

When our children are young, we teach them by taking them along with us, and by setting rules for them which they understand that they are required to follow. For instance, from a very young age, we accustom them to participating in morning and evening services and to attending monthly services, so that these activities become a natural part of their lives. But as they grow, they need to gradually develop their own understanding of the teachings through their own experiences. It's important to find ways to connect the teachings to happenings in their lives so that they can understand what effect the teachings can have on their life.

When my oldest daughter Satoko was in high school, she came to me with a problem she was having with her varsity volleyball team. There seemed to be tension between her and her co-captain. Whenever a point was missed the other captain would get upset and yell at the other player or at Satoko. Instead of helping the team to pull themselves together, the co-captain's negative comments and attitude were bringing the mood of the whole team down. My daughter felt that no one was able to play at her best. Since she was the setter, she sometimes felt like taking it out on the co-captain by not setting the ball to

her although she knew this wasn't the best solution. She had tried talking to her co-captain but that hadn't worked.

Sometimes, as a parent, the problems of our children don't seem very important. We might brush them off, or just give them an off-hand answer and brush it off. Since my daughter had approached me with her problem, I thought it was a great opportunity to help her and to convey to her what I do when I have a problem or feel I need help in my life.

First, I suggested we begin by performing the Twelve Chapters together and asked her to pray not for the other girl to change but for a harmonious solution to the problem, leaving the details up to God.

We talked about the situation, and I asked her to try to look at it from the other girl's perspective; how she might be feeling, what might be motivating her to behave that way. After a few days, Satoko came to me with the realization that the other girl might be competing with her to get good statistics for the season. They were both in their last year of high school and both wanted to continue playing at the college level. So every time the co-captain missed a spike or the team missed a point, she would get angry and lose concentration. I asked Satoko to consider and reflect if she, too, might have been unconsciously competing against her co-captain in the same way. This seemed to be a turning point for her.

Satoko resolved not to do anything that would aggravate the situation, such as arguing with her co-captain or complaining about her to the other teammates. Instead, she made an extra effort to give her co-captain good sets, and to encourage her when she missed a point. She focused on encouraging the whole team to work together during games and to keep up their spirits after they missed points. As a spectator, I noticed a gradual improvement in the attitude of the team members. Over the course of the season, they went from a losing record to winning first place at the State level that year, the first time in the school's history.

While this may not seem like a significant event when we think of the problems facing the world at large, to a seventeen-year-old who is serious about her sport, this was a wonderful solution to her problem. It affected not only her, but also the other team members, the coaches, the team members' families and the students of the school who were enthusiastically following the girl's volleyball season. It also gave my daughter a first-hand experience in how the

teachings might work in her everyday life. It brought her “religion” into her “other” world of school, peers and community. It gave her a blueprint for how to respond to other happenings in her life in a way that would help her to grow closer to God the Parent.

Whenever I hit a roadblock or need help in my life, I always turn first to the service. It is the mainstay of my faith. When I am doing the service, the babbling of my thoughts and tugging of my emotions fall away, and I can tap into a place much deeper. It’s a very calm and clear place. This is the place where I return, and also the place where I begin. From that place, I can begin to reflect on what truth about myself is being reflected back to me by what is happening in my life. Then, I can begin to step out of myself to consider those around me, and get some understanding of how I need to change. I always test my reflections by asking, “What would Oyasama do?” This simple question always shines light on any thoughts that are self-centered. Praying not for a self-serving solution but for one that brings harmony to all, I resolve to change my behavior in some way, however small. Because my attention is taken off “my problem,” my mind is freed and I can begin to feel God working in my life.

When my children were little, we adopted an elderly friend into our family. He had been visiting Japan as a tourist, walking around the streets of Kyoto. He heard some strange music from what seemed to be a temple or shrine and went in to see what was going on. It turns out he had wandered into our grand church. Since our grand church Head Minister Rev. Okuma was the only one who spoke English at the church, the American stranger was brought to him. Rev. Okuma spent some time talking with him and had him write his name on a piece of paper. The paper was completely forgotten until many years later when Rev. Okuma took a book off his shelf and the piece of paper with the American visitor’s name and address fell out. Rev. Okuma saw that it was a New Jersey address so he asked us to please try to contact this person. When I spoke to him on the phone, I was surprised to hear that he remembered very clearly Rev. Okuma and had thoroughly enjoyed his short visit with him at the church. We invited him to our home for our monthly service. It took him over three hours to get to our house by public transportation, but he came every month, stayed overnight and returned the next day.

He felt his health was getting progressively worse and he had no family

to rely on for care. So at one point he was considering selling his house and moving into a nursing home. Rather than moving into a nursing home, we encouraged him to come live with us. He was very happy and surprised by our offer but he hesitated at first because he was worried about his health and did not want to become a burden to us. We reassured him that everything would be alright.

It was important to me that he becomes one of our family members, participating in our family's activities. Since he was a retired university professor, whenever my children had questions on their homework, I would send them in to ask him. Every night after evening service, I prayed for him with the Sazuke. He often apologized to me that while he appreciated the Sazuke prayers, he felt he could not believe in God.

He spoke occasionally of his childhood. He was the oldest child of a very poor family with seven children. Apparently his father was a heavy drinker, and the burden of caring for the family rested on his mother. Whenever he mentioned his mother, he would wince and cringe, and then just say he had never felt any love from her. He had, however, provided for her care when she was old and sick, visiting her frequently, until she died. Despite his various weaknesses in health, he always enjoyed having my children around, watching how we interacted with one another. He often praised me on how well he thought I handled some crisis or happening with the children. It was such a great help to me to hear his kind words while I was struggling to raise my family. He would explain that he assumed my relationship with my children was the result of our faith but, for him, he said, he had never had any feeling of God.

Because he said this often, I began to understand that he felt something in our family that he longed to feel for himself. So during my nightly prayers for him, I began to pray that he would be able to feel God's blessings in his life. One day, quite unexpectedly, he burst out of his room, almost breathless, his face beaming. He was very excited. He said, "I got it! I understand! You love your children, they love you. They love me, I love them. I love you, you love them, they love me and that's how it goes; it goes around like that. That's what God is." I was surprised by his simple and pure experience so I didn't know what to say. But I could see that somehow, through living with our family, he had finally had a "sense of God," a feeling of being held within the warm

embrace of God's love, and he was trying to explain it to me. I was so grateful that he was finally able to draw near to God the Parent.

It's truly amazing how Oyasama works to prepare and open paths for us before we are even aware of them. When Uncle Don wandered into our grand church, Nori and I were not even married yet. After we had started our family and were living on the East Coast, a small piece of paper mysteriously falls out of a book that Rev. Okuma picks off his shelf for some other purpose. I try to start each day by asking Oyasama to please use me as Her instrument. I find that if I do this, I am more open and receptive to what's happening around me, and often some unusual opportunity appears for me to help someone. These unexpected occurrences are more wonderful than anything I could plan.

A few years ago, I was given the opportunity to pray for someone in my town. It was a surprise to learn that there was another Tenrikyo follower in my small New Jersey town. A young woman had contacted the New York Center asking for help for her ailing mother who had come to live with her because of the weakening condition of her health. The mother was Japanese and had been very active in her Tenrikyo church before marrying an American soldier after the war and moving to the United States. The daughter had spent one year in Japan teaching English when she had just graduated from college, and had lived with her relatives there at a Tenrikyo church. She was familiar with the Service from hearing it performed everyday while she was in Japan. She had even visited Jiba, but her knowledge of Tenrikyo was very limited.

The mom had congestive heart failure over a period of 15 years. After the last in a series of repeated hospital visits, the doctors said there was nothing more they could do for her. The daughter brought her mom to her own home to care for her, just 5 minutes from my house. Because the mom wanted to receive the prayer of Sazuke, the daughter contacted the New York Center, and Mrs. Morishita, wife of the head of the Center, contacted me. So I arranged to visit them and went over to their house. I prayed for the mom with the Sazuke. She seemed very grateful to receive the Sazuke prayer. Before I left, I asked if she wanted me to return the next day. She said, "Yes," so I went the next day, prayed for her with the Sazuke again, and asked again if she wanted me to return the following day. So, I continued visiting the family and praying for the mom, staying an hour, sometimes two, talking with the daughter and playing with her little son.

I continued to go to their house for nine months. Nine months may seem like a long time, but I do not think it was a difficult thing to do. What I think was very difficult was how the daughter, pregnant with her second child, cared for her mother so well while taking care of her own family. She set her mom up in a bed in the dining room, and took care of her 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The only help she had were occasional visits from her sister who lived in another state and a health care assistant who came for one hour twice a week. Watching her loving commitment and patience in caring for her mother really made a deep impression on me.

One day, I was not feeling well and laid down to take a short rest before going over to their house for my daily visit. Suddenly, I heard the phone ringing and realized it was about a half hour after my usual visiting time. The mom was worried about me and had asked her daughter to call to make sure that I was alright. I felt so badly that I was late that day, but I was also very touched and humbled by the mom's concern for me.

At one point, the daughter explained to me that her mom would watch the clock and wait for me to come. She said that the Sazuke was the only thing that kept her going, and that afterwards she was much calmer and could sleep well at nights after my visits. I had not really seen any signs that my prayers were helping much at all, so I was very surprised to hear this. I have prayed with the Sazuke in many situations with different results. Although the results here did not seem so terrific, for the first time, I was really overcome with gratitude that Oyasama had drawn me to pray for this mom and that my prayers eased her pain and comforted her mind.

I took some time to reflect on my relationship with this mom and her daughter through this wonderful Gift of the Sazuke given to me to use. I believe the Sazuke is a two-way connection. We open our heart to the other person and he or she opens his or her heart to us and through that pure connection, we are able to help one another. Witnessing the daughter's loving care and patient devotion to her mom and receiving the mom's loving concern myself were their gifts to me as my daily visits and prayers of Sazuke were gifts to them.

Through our efforts to help other people, we are forced to connect with them on a deep level and them to us, as if we are a family. The person we are praying for becomes our mother or father, grandmother or grandfather, sister,

brother or child, and we become for them the same. Through that loving connection, we are both able to feel God's warm and loving embrace. I believe this is the meaning of the phrase, "Through saving others, you are also saved."

I would like to take a few minutes to speak about my own mother. After my father died a few years ago, she had a few bouts with what was diagnosed as pneumonia. Although each time she seemed to recover, her illnesses seemed to last longer and be more difficult for her to overcome. Finally, at the end of last year, she had one very bad relapse. After treating it as pneumonia unsuccessfully, the doctor diagnosed her with unspecified chronic lung disease. She was having great difficulty breathing, but her general health was otherwise very good and her mind was still sharp. Finally, the doctor treated her with very strong medication which, after some time, seemed to control the lung inflammation and increase her breathing capacity to a manageable level.

However, during this prolonged illness, her condition was very weak, so I stayed everyday at the hospital all day to help her to eat and to try to keep her comfortable since she could not even adjust herself in her bed. Both my Mom and Dad had received the Sazuke when my children were young and they had both completed the Spiritual Development Course at Los Angeles. They were very supportive of the church and our connection to it. Until my father became ill a few years before he passed away, they had attended our monthly services every month. So naturally, I offered to pray with the Sazuke for my Mom. But she refused my offer of the Sazuke. At first, this made me feel very sad. While I was fumbling my way through the medical system, never sure I was making the right decisions, I felt confident that the Sazuke was the one thing that would help my Mom. Not being able to pray for her with the Sazuke made me feel that I wasn't doing everything I could to help her. But, I immediately realized that I was just looking at the situation from my own perspective. When one path is closed, we just need to try harder to find another way around. It meant I needed to be more attentive to my Mom's needs and desires. I resolved to put more energy into my nightly special prayer services, and I started praying for her all the time in my thoughts.

My family was so supportive of both me and my Mom and I received much support from all the members of the New York Center. My husband was so supportive in many ways, and so patient with my many and long absences from home. My older daughter Satoko made two trips from Hawaii to visit her

grandma, and help her with her therapy. My son Hiro came home often to help with driving back and forth to my Mom's place. When he called, he also asked how I was holding up. My younger daughter Yoko, who had just graduated from college, interrupted her job searching so that she would be free to help me take care of grandma. Wanting to do something more for her grandma, she decided to enter the Spiritual Development Course here at Jiba this spring.

My Mom eventually recovered enough to move to a rehabilitation facility. At one point she became very depressed, and my daughters both encouraged her on, trying their best to cheer her up, and help her continue her efforts to get better. By our next visit, my Mom seemed to rally herself to fight to get better. She worked hard and eventually was able to return to her home. However, a little over a month later she contracted a secondary infection and ended up in the hospital again.

Because she refused to be incubated or placed on a breathing machine, all that the doctor could do for her was provide forced oxygen through a mask. But that was just a temporary solution. It was difficult to see my Mom struggling to breathe. I realized what a blessing it is to be able to take a deep breath of fresh air, but I also felt guilty because I could do that and she couldn't. I felt so sorry that she was struggling. But then I thought I must change my mind. I did not want her to look at my face and see my turmoil reflected back in it. The phrase from the Mikagura-uta came to my mind, "I will not cause you to suffer, so lean closely on the mind of God." I needed to affirm that while her body was not functioning well, she was not suffering. As I focused on this phrase, I suddenly felt my conflicting emotions fall away and I felt peaceful. Instead of seeing a picture of suffering and pain, I had a powerful feeling that both my Mom and I were wrapped in the warm love of the Parent.

My Mom chose to have her oxygen therapy removed and only asked to be sedated first. She would not be able to continue very long without receiving oxygen, so I asked her twice to make sure that was what she wanted. But she seemed to have no hesitation or doubt about her decision. I asked my Mom again if she would like me to pray with the Sazuke for her, and this time she said, "Yes." When I finished, I asked her if she would like the Catholic Last Rites. She said, "No," that it was okay because I had done my Sazuke prayer and that was enough. We said our goodbyes. I was able to tell her how much I loved her and how much all her family loved her. We shared smiles and a laugh

at a fond memory of my Dad. As the sedative took effect, she fell asleep and passed on peacefully early the next morning.

The nurses at the hospital were really extraordinary in both caring for my Mom and helping me, and I was so grateful for their kindness and concern. But it was difficult for me to really grasp what had happened. I was just feeling lost and sad. A few hours earlier, I was talking with my Mom and holding her hand, and now she wasn't there to squeeze my hand back or smile at me. I wanted to hear her voice again and look into her eyes.

Since my Mom died, I have thought a lot about the phrase, "The human body is a thing lent, a thing borrowed." She really did leave her body on that hospital bed just like "a piece of clothing she had taken off." It is difficult for us who are left behind. But it really is amazing if you think about it. With that body she had experienced so many things in her life. Through her body, I was given this body which I am using this very moment to share this time with all of you. What an extraordinary gift God has given us! We may at times feel sadness or pain, but we also can feel wonderful joyousness and gratitude. We can interact with one another and share experiences. And through our loving relationships with others we can feel God's presence and love in our life. I am so grateful that my children and I were able to spend many years enjoying both grandma and grandpa's love.

During the Children's Pilgrimage when my children were little, the former Shinbashira would come out on a stage in the courtyard after the morning service program and say a few words. One summer, he explained that while we usually interpret one of the directives of the Boys and Girls Association to mean, "Savoring the joy of being kept alive," a slightly different interpretation might perhaps be closer to the truth. It was something more like, "Savor the flavor of life itself." He went on to say that for some the flavor of life is "sour," for others, "salty," or "sweet." But no matter what flavor our life is, we can still savor and appreciate that flavor because it is the gift of life given to us by God.

The teachings are not things that we do but how we live our life. It is through our relationships with others, first with our family and those close to us, and then with others who become as family to us, through our efforts to find harmony and share joy that we learn about ourselves and God. If the world is our mirror, it not only reflects the dust in our mind when we encounter disharmony, but it also reflects God's warm love to us when we touch the

hearts of other human beings and our hearts are touched in return. I believe our true goal is to come closer to God and to have an intimate sense of God in our life. As Tenrikyo looks further outward, I hope we remember that our true goal is to enlighten each other's minds to the truth of God's Parental Love.

## The Mikagura-uta

Hiroshi Fukaya

(Rev. Hiroshi Fukaya served as the head of Tenrikyo Mission Center in Singapore from 1997 until 2004 as well as vice-principal of Tenrikyo Language Institute and resides in Tenri, Japan)

During this session, we will discuss the Scriptures of Tenrikyo. I believe you already know there are three Scriptures in Tenrikyo. They are the Ofudesaki, *The Tip of the Writing Brush*, the Mikagura-uta, *The Songs for the Service*, and the Osashizu, *The Divine Directions*. The purpose of this session is to discuss these three Scriptures.

However, we only have two speakers; therefore, we cannot cover the Three Scriptures in this session. I want you to understand this point first.

What I am going to talk about in this session is the Mikagura-uta. However, I do not have the ability to talk about the entire Mikagura-uta; therefore, I will focus on only the second section, that is, “*Choto-banashi* . . .” of the Mikagura-uta and talk about my understanding and interpretation of it. I really appreciate that you understand my situation. Then, after I talk about my understanding, I would like to propose to you a question which I want you to think about.

Before I continue my speech, I would like to ask and confirm the following matters. The Mikagura-uta consists of five sections. Or I should say, the Mikagura-uta is divided into five sections in large. The part of the seated service, “*Ashiki o harote tasuke tamae Tenri-O-no-Mikoto*,” is Section One. Next, “*Choto banashi*,” is Section Two. “*Ichiretsu Sumashite Kanroda?*” is Section Three. The Eight Verses of Yorozuyo is Section Four, and the Song One to Twelve is Section Five. I ask that you keep this point in your mind.

Also, even though I use the word “Service,” basically what I mean is the Kagura Service. I do not mean the monthly services at your church or the morning and evening services. I ask you also to keep this point in your mind.

As you already know, the Mikagura-uta is the Songs for the Service. We sing it together with singers when the Service performers perform the Service at Church Headquarters. We unite our minds to God’s intention or to the truth of the Service by singing the Mikagura-uta. If we think that the Mikagura-uta is taught by Oyasama, the Foundress, and it is the Songs for the Service, we may

be able to understand that the Mikagura-uta are the words of God the Parent.

If you have read *The Life of Oyasama, Foundress of Tenrikyo*, you should know that the most important reason why Oyasama hid Her physical being by shortening Her term of life by twenty-five years is to let the followers at that time perform the Service.

The Service is such an important teaching in Tenrikyo. We should firmly recognize and settle in our minds that the Mikagura-uta is the Songs for the Service, which is a very important teaching for us. In order to perform the Service, we need three elements. Those are “the Service performers,” “the Jiba,” and “the Instruments.”

“The Service performers” are people who perform the Kagura Service around the Jiba by wearing the *kagura* masks; however, in a broad sense, they might include the *Teodori* (service dance) performers, singers, and people who play musical instruments for the Kagura Service.

“The Jiba” is the place where human beings were first conceived at the time of creation and is the center for the performance of the Kagura Service. The Kagura Service is only performed around the Jiba. Therefore, the Jiba is necessary in order to perform the Kagura Service.

“The Instruments” includes the Mikagura-uta, the Songs for the Service. Also, the *kagura* masks and musical instruments are included as “the Instruments.”

The Kagura Service is also called “The Kanrodai Service,” “The Salvation Service,” and “The Joyous Service,” depending on its workings of the truth. However, even though there are four names for the Service, they are all the same Service. As the Service is divided into two parts, the Kagura Service and the *Teodori*, in a broad sense the Mikagura-uta is also divided into two parts, the songs for the Kagura Service and the songs for the *Teodori*.

If I compare the relationship between the songs for the Kagura Service and the songs for the *Teodori*, I think that they are just like the relationship between the Ofudesaki, *The Tip of Writing Brush*, and the Osashizu, *The Divine Directions*. In other words, the songs for the Kagura Service are the core of teachings and the songs for the *Teodori*, the Yorozuyo and the Twelve Songs, support or amplify the core.

In this session, I would like to focus on the songs for the Kagura Service, especially on the song of “*Choto banashi*,” Section Two of the three sections.

One more thing, I would like to confirm with you before I continue my speech is that, in order to explain the meanings of the Mikagura-uta, there is a problem of who is going to be the subject. In other words, who is the subject of the Mikagura-uta, God or human beings? This point is not clear in Japanese. Grammatically, it is not always necessary to define the subject in Japanese, although it is often needed to define the subject in English.

Therefore, in some songs of the Mikagura-uta, there is an interpretation that the first half of those songs has God as the subject and the second half has humans as the subject. In other words, within the same song, there is no consistent subject. Also, by looking at the Japanese Mikagura-uta, there are songs for which both God and human beings could be the subject. In fact, most of the interpretation books, including those that my father or others wrote, look at the Mikagura-uta as a dialogue between God and human beings. In these books, some songs are interpreted with God as the subject and the other songs are interpreted as human beings as the subject.

However, as I said at the beginning, if we believe the Mikagura-uta is God's words, then the subject of the Mikagura-uta should always be God. What do you think?

The Mikagura-uta is the Songs for the Service and it is possible to misunderstand its meaning if you just read it. That is, if you read it without consideration of the hand or dance movements, you will misunderstand the true meaning of the Mikagura-uta. Therefore, I believe it is important to explain its meaning with the dance movements.

Furthermore, what I would like to turn your attention to is that we might misunderstand the meaning of the songs of the Kagura Service if we think only of the dance movements of the seated services in the morning and evening services or monthly services at your church. These are the same dance movements of the Kagura Service. At this session, I am trying to explain the meaning of the Kagura Service, which are the songs for the Service at the Jiba. In other words, I am trying to explain the Songs for the Service, which the Service performers perform in a standing position. They are not sitting on the ground around the Jiba. I want you to imagine this point. We are not discussing the seated services, which are performed at your church during morning or evening services or at monthly services.

Section Two is only performed once. Section One is performed twenty-

one times and Section Three is performed in three sets of seven, which equals twenty-one times. By thinking of this, I think that Section Two is a very important section.

For Section Two, all the interpretation books that I know identify God as the subject. In other words, for Section Two, those interpretation books argue that God the Parent is talking to human beings in this song. And I think so, too.

For the Section Two, there isn't any problem about what is the subject. However, there is a translation problem. There is a difference between the Japanese version and the English one. The difference is that in English, "heaven" comes before "earth;" however, in Japanese, "earth" comes before "heaven." The English translation is vice-versa from the original Japanese verse. We have to be very careful about this. Why is that so? I believe that it is important that "earth" comes before "heaven."

We live on the earth. In that sense, we live on a base, which is the earth. We do not live in heaven. At the time of Creation, there was a base, which was the earth. You are able to understand this point if you do the dance movements to this part.

First, as you say "*Ji*," you press your both hands down with both index fingers pointing away from you in front of your stomach. Then, you flip your left index finger and at the same time your right hand moves upward. I want you to pay attention to these movements. These movement tells us that there was "*Ji*," the earth first, then "*Ten*" comes next.

Mr. Masaichi Moroi, who was a son of the founder of Yamana Grand Church, was said to be the first Honbu-seinen, the first young attendant at Church Headquarters. After Oyasama hid Her physical being, he became a Honbu-seinen; therefore, he never heard the teachings directly from Oyasama. However, there were many reverends who heard the teachings directly from Oyasama. Therefore, Mr. Moroi was able to hear the teachings or stories of Oyasama from them, and he recorded the teachings and stories he heard. And now, it is published as a book.

In his book, it is written, "*Ji* is not moving; therefore, it is *Ji*. On the other hand, *Ten* changes; therefore, it is *Ten*." [This may be interpreted that "*Ji*" means "not moving" in Japanese; therefore, the hand movement of "*Ji*" remains in front of stomach. On the other hand, "*Ten*" means "changes" in Japanese;

therefore, the hand gesture of “*Ten*” moves from stomach height to shoulder height.]

It may be hard to understand this part. This was probably told by one of the descendants who was taught by Oyasama directly, and he perhaps told it to Mr. Moroi. From this episode, we can understand that “*J*” was first and “*Ten*” came next.”

Obviously, this tells us that we are living on the earth. We are not living in heaven, which is beyond this world. From this point, we can understand that we, human beings, are living in this world, not living in the great beyond. The hand movements of “*J*” and “*Ten*” may have a message that we should establish the Joyous Life in this world.

Well, let’s go back a little bit. In Moroi’s book, we can find the next passage as follows: This year (Meiji 3, 1870), Oyasama taught us “*Choto hanashi* (Section Two)” and “*Yorozuyo*,” and She told “*Yorozuyo*” is a prelude to the Twelve Songs. And since then, we perform “*Yorozuyo*” before the Twelve Songs.

Also, years later, Oyasama told us “*Choto hanashi*” is a prelude to the “*Ichiretsusumasu Kanrodai* (Section Three).” Therefore, “*Ichiretsusumasu Kanrodai*” is just before “*Choto hanashi*,” and there is a Sazuke, the Divine Grant, of “*Shinjitsu Teodor*” accompanied by the singing of “*Kanrodai*.” For this Sazuke, “*Choto hanashi*” is accompanied and by the singing of the “*Kanrodai*” part three times and rubbing three times. By thinking of these facts, we cannot erase God’s truth of the prelude.

Therefore, Section Two must be the prelude to Section Three. In other words, we may say that Sections Two and Three are a set. This kind of relation is the same for the Section Four, “*Yorozuyo*,” and Section Five, the Twelve Songs.

Because “*Choto hanashi*” and “*Yorozuyo*” are so called preludes, they might be accompanied by the phrase, “*Yoshi, yoshi*.” That’s my understanding.

I think that Section Two is talking about the Creation briefly by telling us that the core of this world or the core of human beings is husband and wife, or man and woman. I feel that Section Two is very unique from Section One and Three. Of course, the uniqueness includes that Section Two is the prelude of the Section Three. However, I think that is not the only reason that makes Section Two unique. I focus on its hand movements, which are very different from Sections One and Three. You can see the difference. For example, at the beginning, we first move our right index finger back and forth, or when

we say “*Asbiki*,” we pillow our head with our right arm. Also, we move both index fingers back and forth when we say “*Konojo no*,” or when we say “*Ji to Ten*,” we move our fingers up and down. These movements tell us obviously that Section Two is very different from Section One and Three. Why is it so different?

I think because Section Two is talking about the story of Creation. In other words, it is a song that symbolizes the story of the Truth of Origin. By moving our hands back and forth, up and down, left and right, and that the Service performers are standing when they perform, all these movements symbolize and show the creation of the world and human beings.

At the beginning of Section Two, we use our right index finger by saying “*Choto banashi*.” I think this symbolizes that God the Parent talks to us. This one index finger, which is pointing upward, symbolizes God the Parent. And that God is talking to human beings. “*Hitokoto banashi*” in Song Seven does the same kind of movement; however, I believe this has a different meaning from “*Choto banashi*.”

Next, “*Kami*” is God the Parent and we put together our palms in front of our chest. This also symbolizes God the Parent and includes or symbolizes God’s ten providences.

Then, as we say “*Yu Koto Kite Kure* (Listen to what God says),” we point to our mouth by using our right index finger. By doing so, God is asking human beings to listen to what God says.

By saying “*Asbiki no koto wa iwan dena* (I never tell you anything wrong),” we pillow our head with our right arm. Even though “*Asbiki*” is translated to “anything wrong” in English, it is written “*Asbiki*” in Japanese, which is the same as “*Asbiki*” in Sections One and Three. However, the hand movements of Section Two differ from that of Sections One and Three. Therefore, we can understand that “*Asbiki*” of Section Two does not mean the same as “*Asbiki*” of Sections One and Three. As it is translated in English, “*Asbiki*” of Sections One and Three means “evils,” and “*Asbiki*” of Section Two means “anything wrong.” I believe “*Asbiki*” in Section Two is not the same “evils” as it is in Sections One and Three.

As we say “*Kono yo no*,” we point upward both of our index fingers and move them back and forth, alternately flipping the fingers. When we pull back one of our index fingers towards us with the finger showing its palm side,

then in the opposite direction, the other finger shows its nail side. What we can understand from these movements is that they symbolize the providences of the Moon and the Sun. In other words, these movements symbolize the providences of *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* and *Omotari-no-Mikoto*. Each finger symbolizes either *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* or *Omotari-no-Mikoto*. By looking at the movements of these fingers, we can realize that the Moon and the Sun are working together to create this world. I believe these movements show how God the Parent created “time.”

We can see that by showing movements of “*Ji to ten*,” in which we lift our right hand from the front of a stomach to a shoulder height, God is creating “space.”

For “*Katadorite*,” we use all of our fingers, not just the index fingers. This means we use all ten fingers for the movement. I believe that this symbolizes God is creating human beings. By using all ten fingers for the movement when we say “*Katadorite*,” God is creating the original human beings with God’s ten providences at this point.

For “*Fufu* (husband and wife),” left palm wraps right fingers. This movement also shows God working which is creating husband and wife, the very origin of human beings. I believe that tapping the left palm with the right fingers twice symbolizes husband and wife.

For this part of the Kagura Service, the Service performers of *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* and *Omotari-no-Mikoto* work together, and the Service performers of *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* and *Izanami-no-Mikoto* work together. The Service performer of *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* moves both hands from up to down, just like when covering something from the top with both hands. On the contrary, the Service performer of *Omotari-no-Mikoto* moves both hands by showing its palms upward, just like when receiving something from above. For the movements of this part of the Service the performers of *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* and *Izanami-no-Mikoto*, they almost do the same thing as *Kunitokotachi-no-Mikoto* and *Omotari-no-Mikoto*. However, their hands touch each other. Both hands of *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* touch the hands of *Izanami-no-Mikoto* from the top and the hands of *Izanami-no-Mikoto* receive the hands of *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* from the bottom.

For “*Koshirae*,” we cross our arms. This may symbolize that husband and wife cross each other. Also, it may include the meaning that husband and wife work as one.

For “*Kitaru dena*,” we can find that both hands move almost in the same manner. I think that after God the Parent created time, space, and the original human beings, which are husband and wife, God started to show the ten providences.

For “*Kore wa kono yo no hajime dashi*,” there is the following interpretation. Movements of this part symbolize, “the first children were reborn three times after they passed away for rebirth three times” in the “Truth of Origin.” At this point, we need to pay attention to the movements of our hands. We first extend out our right hand and then our left hand.

I do not know exactly where the following understanding came from. There is an understanding that the left is the truth of man and the right is the truth of woman. By following this understanding, I feel there is a profound meaning to the movement in which we first extend out our right hand. In other words, it seems that this order tells us that a woman bears a baby (or babies). Then, I feel that, after both truths of man and woman were established, we extend out our both hands as we sing “*hajime dashi*,” which symbolize that God blesses us by allowing us to give birth to our children.

For “*Namu Tenri-O-no-Mikoto*,” this includes the meaning that you become a believer or follower of Tenri-O-no-Mikoto and that you believe in God the Parent, or that you are a follower of Tenri-O-no-Mikoto.

The above mentioned are my own interpretations about Section Two with the hand or dance movements. I would like to confirm the following matter with you.

Although Section Two is based on husband and wife, it briefly expresses the creation of the world and human beings. Keeping this matter in mind, it is important to attend the Kagura Service and sing the song by uniting our minds to the Service performers.

At your church, the monthly services receive this truth and are performed; therefore, it is very important to attend the monthly services with the attitude what I have mentioned. Also, when you perform Section Two at morning and evening services, it is important not to forget the truth of this section while you are performing it.

There are many ways of understanding Section Two. I wonder what kind of comprehension you may have for this Section.

Before I end my speech, I would like you to raise a question. I believe the

Mikagura-uta are words of God the Parent. Of course, the Ofudesaki, *The Tip of the Writing Brush*, is also words of God the Parent. Therefore, I believe it is important to sing the Mikagura-uta in God's words.

The Mikagura-uta is written in Japanese, and probably the main reason is because the Jiba exists in Japan.

It is important how you interpret this point. Do you think the Jiba exists in Japan by chance or you think the Jiba exists in Japan because of God's plan to establish the nation of Japan around the Jiba? In other words, the point is whether or not you understand that God planned to establish Japan around the Jiba.

I believe that God planned this. I believe that God the Parent established Japan around the Jiba and God chose the Japanese language as a tool for conveying the teachings. This was planned from the beginning by God. What do you think?

If you agree with my thoughts, don't you think we should sing the Mikagura-uta in Japanese in Jiba, which is the language chosen by God the Parent? I think we should sing the Mikagura-uta in Japanese around the Jiba.

At present, in Korea, the Mikagura-uta is sung in Korean. Some of you may have heard the Mikagura-uta in Korean at the Main Sanctuary. If people in the world gather at the Main Sanctuary and sing the Mikagura-uta in their own languages, what is going to happen? Can you imagine? We may unite our mind by singing the Mikagura-uta in their own languages. However, can you hear the song in harmony? I question and wonder about this point.

I understand it is important to translate the Mikagura-uta into many languages in order to understand its meanings or to memorize the dance movements. However, when we sing the Mikagura-uta at the Jiba, I think we should sing it in God's original words. By doing so, I believe, we can truly unite our minds.

There may be various answers or understandings for this question. By raising this question to you, I would like to conclude my speech.

## Osashizu

Tsunenori Ichise

(Rev. Ichise established and is the head of Joyous Mission Station in Hawaii)

### Pre-reading Comment:

Please keep in mind that (1) most of the following Osashizu passages are trial translations done by the speaker himself through his own understanding of the Japanese passage and therefore the translations are unofficial, and that (2) some of the Osashizu are left as Japanese because of difficulty of translation.

### I. What is Osashizu?

#### A. A “Talk” by God the Parent:

1. “Let me clarify that the ‘Talk’ means the ‘Talk’ by God the Parent, which was spoken to us through Oyasama’s mouth upon the arrival of the Promised Time. It means the ‘Talk’ spoken by Oyasama as She conveyed (*the truth of the teachings*) to us. Likewise the ‘Timely Talk’ delivered through Honseki on later days, it is a ‘Talk’ by God the Parent. In other words, the ‘Timely Talk,’ before the 15th year of Meiji (approximately), was occasionally delivered in the form of the Ofudesaki, however, it was delivered only orally thereafter, instructing people to transcribe them.” – Shozen Nakayama, (*Hitokotobanashi Volume II*, p. 113).

#### B. The “Spoken Words” of God the Parent:

2. “The words spoken by Oyasama in the effort of conveying the truth of the teachings to us since She had become the Shrine of God the Parent in 1838 are truly the ‘Spoken Words’ of God the Parent, and, therefore, they are truly the Osashizu in that sense. However, there are no accurately transcribed records of these words nor have they been kept intact, and, thus, they are not considered the Osashizu.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 12).

3. “The Osashizu here, in contrast to the Ofudesaki and in a broad sense or abstractly, means the words of Oyasama, spoken in the effort of conveying the truth of the teachings to us.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 12).

C. The “Divine Will” of God the Parent:

4. “The disciples clearly understood the divine will but they still did not perform the Service.” (*The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, p. 41); the word “Osashizu” is not mentioned throughout the main body of the doctrine (mentioned only as the citation for the excerpts).

D. One of the Scriptures and the Permanent Truth:

5. “The Scriptures of Tenrikyo are the books that establish the dogmatic foundation and the essence of the Tenrikyo religion, and they are ‘Ofudesaki,’ ‘Mikagura-uta,’ and ‘Osashizu.’” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 11).

E. The Directions revealed by God the Parent:

6. “The Osashizu contains the directions revealed by God the Parent.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 153).

7. “. . . essential revelation is what was introduced to us through Oyasama’s mouth, Her writing brush, and the Divine Model of Oyasama. In addition to them are the words spoken through Honseki Izo Iburi in certain settings.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, pp. 149-151).

8. “The Osashizu contains the Directions revealed by God the Parent with intent to save all humankind. It is the words of God delivered singly for the sake of human salvation.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 11).

F. Teachings Orally Instructed by Oyasama and through Honseki Izo Iburi:

9. “Precisely speaking, the Osashizu contains the teachings orally instructed by Oyasama and through Honseki Izo Iburi between January 4, 1887 and June 9, 1907. – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 153).

10. “It contains the Directions delivered through Honseki Izo Iburi. Most of the Osashizu contains the teachings that were spoken by Oyasama through the mouth of Honseki Izo Iburi. – (*Kaitei Tenrikyo Jiten*, p. 153).

11. “Oyasama established Izo Iburi as Honseki and delivered the teachings through him.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 19).

Timely Talk:

Sah, sah, over here and over there; you will not understand from bits here and there. You must listen carefully or you will not understand. God, who appeared, is not a god who intends that you should suffer or worry. This is not something I have to tell you now. There must have been days until now when you might have realized this. There were those near and far whose sincerity I have accepted. Deep is My regret that I was not able to give them what they deserve. Oh, the regret of My regrets. If I say, "Now, God will descend, now, God will appear," you may not accept it. In this Residence, God worked from the time when nothing was understood. Sah, if you understand this basis, sah, I shall tell you. If you accept it, I shall tell you. If you are unable to accept it, it will remain just as it is. Sah, what is your reply? I shall not compel you to accept.

Those present replied, "We fully accept." Then God stated:

Sah, sah, listen carefully. He has been called a carpenter and moves his work place from here to there. He is able to do only his own work. In the past ten or twenty years there have been many whose sincerity I have accepted. Among them are those who have been long in the path and those who have just begun. I have seen the workings of their minds and I have accepted those who are sincere. So there are many on whom I wish to bestow a gift. If I bestow the gifts through him in his present work you may think you have received it because of your intimacy with him. This gift is a gift from heaven and there are various kinds. There are those who have received the gifts in various ways. In order to bestow this gift, I wish to end his present position and settle him as the Honseki. As it is now, it is regretful, regretful. Sah, sah, will you accept this? Sah, is it agreed?

Shinnosuke replied that he would offer Izo Iburi to God and that he would be responsible for Iburi's wife and children and would accept him as the Honseki. Then God continued:

I have a small request. I said to settle him as the *Seki* but I do not tell you to do anything special for him right now. There are three people, five people, ten people whose positions are the same as his. But he is the one on whom I put silk over his brocade. Other words will follow.

Osashizu, March 25, 1887

G. Supplementary Teaching, Practical and Concrete Teaching; Realistic Directions:

12. “In comparison to the Ofudesaki, the Osashizu contains rather supplemental, practical, and concrete or realistic teachings.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 154).

13. “The Second Shinbashira pointed out that the Osashizu are the words of Directions, which we should use to rectify the course of our lives.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 158).

14. “The Second Shinbashira, at the International Association for the History of Religions, shared his thoughts . . . the ‘Mikagura-uta’ provides guidance of life and soul, the ‘Ofudesaki’ provides dogmatic foundation, the ‘Story of Creation’ reveals the mystic truth, and the ‘Osashizu’ provides practical guidance . . .” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 157).

H. “Timely Talk” v. “Directions in response to Inquiries”:

15. “In a broad sense, there are two distinctive types of Osashizu, one is the “Timely Talk,” which was delivered actively by God the Parent, solely for the salvation of humankind, and the other is the “answer-to-response type of Directions, which were delivered in response to the inquiries of our predecessors of their illnesses or troubles.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 154).

16. “The truth instructed in a timely manner” – “Timely Directions,” “Timely Talk”

“The truth instructed about illness” – “Directions in response to Inquiries”  
– Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 39).

「さあ ― 皆時を以てさしづした理もある。又身上からさしづした理もある」

Osashizu, May 15, 1901

「刻限と尋ね事情とはころっと変わるで」

Osashizu, May 14, 1892

I. The “Transcription” of God’s Words:

17. “The Osashizu is the compilation of the transcribed words of Oyasama Herself and those spoken through Honseki Izo Ihuri.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Jyo*, p. 16).

18. “It was emphasized to transcribe the Osashizu rather than to listen and store it in one’s memory whenever it was delivered.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Jyo*, p. 16).

刻限御話

「さあ 〱 〱 一日身に付き、三段の芽吹く治まり置く。今すっきり片付け。すっきりもうよき。もうか知らん、どうや知らん。分からん者すうきりという事、今話筆に付け置け。」

Osashizu, March 25, 1887

You may wonder what kind of directions I will give. Sah, sah! Directions, directions. Listen attentively. Write them down . . .

Osashizu, April 6, 1890

Since I will instruct you in your circumstances for a while, you must faultlessly write down what I say and keep it fully in mind. When you are ready, I will begin to speak.

Osashizu, March 18, 1895

19. “According to my research, both intermediaries and transcribers were present at the time and place when the Osashizu was delivered. Immediately following the delivery of the Osashizu, the transcribers compared their notes, confirmed the accuracy of their transcription, and prepared the clean copy. The Osashizu were then shared with inquiring followers and reserved for themselves and the Church Headquarters.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Jyo*, p. 16).

20. “In a narrower sense, the Osashizu as one of scriptures are the books of seven volumes sorted and compiled by the Church Headquarters with its

authority and responsibility. It is the compilation of the words revealed by God between January 4, 1887 and June 9, 1907.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 12).

21. “Why does not the Osashizu compiled in seven volumes include the words of Oyasama other than those spoken immediately before Oyasama withdrew from Her physical existence? The main reason may be due to the question of the reliability of orally passing the information down.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, pp. 153-154).

22. “About that time, both the Foundress and Kokan-sama received Divine Direction and alternately communicated God’s wishes.” – Shozen Nakayama, (*Hitokotobanashi*, p. 30).

-Not considered as part of the Osashizu for the same reason as above #21.

23. “God descended through Kokan . . .” – Masaichi Moroi, (*Seibunin-sho*, p. 69).

-Not considered as part of the Osashizu for the same reason as above #21.

#### J. Scope and Standard applied in the compilation of the Osashizu:

24. “In the attempt to preserve its accuracy, the scope and standard in the compilation of the Osashizu were as follows: (1) all of the ‘Timely Talk,’ (2) all of those that concerns church issues, (3) responses to the inquires on illness and troubles of the people, who were staff and/or their family members at the time of the compilation, and (4) responses to the inquires on illness and troubles of the people, who were head ministers of directory supervised churches and/or their family members at the time of the compilation.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 17).

#### II. The Place the Osashizu was delivered through Honzeki Izo Iburi:

1. “The storehouse you see in the Osashizu given in 1887 (Meiji 20): ‘An inquiry was made through Izo Iburi on the second floor of the storehouse.’” – Shozen Nakayama, (*Hitokotobanashi*, p. 34).

#### III. The Period the Osashizu was delivered:

1. “Oyasama began giving more oral instructions just about when She ceased to write the Ofudesaki. It may be construed that the urging with ‘*The Tip of the Writing Brush*’ had shifted to the urging ‘solely by oral instruction.’ It

must have been due to the profound love of God the Parent. As the number of worshippers increased, Oyasama was obliged to give oral instructions more frequently. That more transcribers became available could have been another reason for that. As I extend my thoughts to Oyasama's age, that She was 85 years old, I don't know how to apologize to Her." – Shozen Nakayama, (*Hitokotohanashi Volume II*, p. 113).

2. "In the 15th year of Meiji (1882), there was a following line in the Osashizu: 'Oyasama had gone through another hardship in the 15th year of Meiji when She was taken to Nara Prison. God the Parent then descended through Honseki and said . . .'" – Shozen Nakayama, (*Hitokotohanashi*, p. 181), and Masaichi Moroi, (*Seibunin-sho*, p. 107).

3. "On behalf of Oyasama, Izo Iburi as Honseki conveyed the Divine Will of God the Parent between the 10th year of Meiji (1887), after Oyasama had withdrawn from Her physical existence, and the 40th year of Meiji (1907)." – Shozen Nakayama, (*Hitokotohanashi Volume II*, p. 95).

4. "From the 20th year of Meiji (1887) until Honseki Izo Iburi passed away for rebirth in the 40th year of Meiji, the Divine Will of God the Parent was continually delivered. It is the period during which the original revelation took place. In this sense, the situation did not change from the time when Oyasama was physically present." – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 27).

#### IV. Publication of the Osashizu:

1. "The Osashizu, authorized as a scripture, was first published during the period between 1927 and 1931." – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 38).

2. "The Osashizu as a scripture was published and distributed to the churches during the period between 1948 and 1949, and the revised Osashizu was published and distributed in 1966." – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 56).

3. “. . . the Osashizu, thus compiled as dogmatic material, was published in thirty-three volumes. Volume 1 was published in October 1927 and Volume 33 in June 1931. These volumes were republished in eight volumes and distributed to the churches during the period between 1936 and 1937 as the commemorative publication for Oyasama’s Fiftieth Anniversary and the Centennial Anniversary of Tenrikyo . . . ” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 17).

4. “. . . the Ofudesaki and the Osashizu were recalled in 1939. In January 1966, the seven volumes of the revised Osashizu were distributed . . . ” – Tomoji Takano, (*Tenrikyo-Shi Sanko Nenpyo*).

#### V. The Significance of the Osashizu:

1. “. . . during those years, the followers were able to look up to the Osashizu as practical guidance in all phases of their lives, internal and external issues of the church affairs, or individual as well as social issues . . . ” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 27).

2. “. . . during those years, however, the Osashizu were mainly concrete and practical guidance in solving various problems experienced by the followers. The Osashizu were not then construed as the everlasting or dogmatic truth.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 27).

3. “For the sake of convenience, I would divide the 20 years between the 20th year of Meiji (1887) and the 40th year of Meiji (1907) into two periods: the first period consists of the first 10 years until the 29th year of Meiji (1896), during which period, since the time when the Tenrikyo Church was sanctioned in Tokyo, many churches were established throughout the country as the faith and morale of the followers was uplifted by leaps and bounds and the teachings had thus spread very rapidly. It continued until the 29th year of Meiji (1896), when Oyasama’s 10th Anniversary was held. This rapid growth of Tenrikyo invited objections and attacks, which included unfavorable criticism publicized in newspapers both in the Osaka and Tokyo districts. Thus, the latter period begins on April 6 of the 29th year of Meiji (1896) when, immediately following Oyasama’s 10th Anniversary, the Secret Directive was issued by the Ministry

of Home Affairs of the Meiji government. It caused immeasurably immense damage to Tenrikyo, and its rapid growth was halted abruptly. Tenrikyo was then forced to endure years of hardships.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 28).

4. “However, if we look at this period of hardships from a historical point of view, it might have been the period for the followers to review their internal issues because, during this period, they were inevitably obliged to depend on the Osashizu for each step they made.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 28).

5. “Because they were able to seek the Osashizu, they had never lost sight of Oyasama throughout the hardship and difficulties. Through the Osashizu, they could continually feel the parental heart of Oyasama and seek the Divine Will of God the Parent.” – Hideo Nakajima, (*Sosetsu Tenrikyo-Gaku*, p. 51).

6. “. . . because they could receive divine guidance through the Honseki whenever they had whatever kinds of inquiries, no conflict nor split occurred among them, and they were able to remain united. If the Divine Directions had ended with the end of Oyasama’s physical existence, I am sure that they would have been split as each of them had his/her own thoughts, especially with the issue of the Tenrikyo Church being sanctioned. As I extend my thoughts to that possibility, I cannot help but feel grateful for the truth and the free and unlimited workings of God the Parent.” – Masaichi Morio, (*Seibuninsho*, p. 123).

7. “The Osashizu is what we followers of the Path can depend upon as the most reliable guidance in every aspect of our faithful life.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Ijyo*, p. 56).

#### 刻限御話

「道というものは、どうでもこうでも。道に関があつては通られん。橋があつても橋が腐りて居りゃ通れるか。そりゃ一人や二人は通られぬ事はないけれども、向こうは危ないへ。道は半ばであれば、分り兼ねる。分り兼ねるがもっともである。なれども、刻限という理から論して基

づかねばいかん。道の上に第一差し支えるという理分からにやならん。どうしょうこうしょう聞き分け。刻限話又ふでさきにも知らしたる。又時々身の障り へ、皆々道理に論したる。勝手の良い者用い易い。勝手の悪い者用い難くい。あっちやろうか、こっちやろうか、雨が降る風が吹いたらどうするか。どんな者掛かりてもこんな者掛かりても、何よ神一条と大きな話に止めて置く」

Osashizu, October 31, 1900

#### VI. Who Transcribed the Osashizu?

1. “Buhachi Yoshida of Asuka Village of Minami Kawachi received the blessing of cure from his abdominal typhoid. Buhachi, along with Shizu (also known as Kane), his adopted daughter, often visited *Ojiba* to worship. Shizu said as follows: ‘. . . God spoke not only during the night time. Whenever there was a talk by God, everyone gathered and listened. Five or six people transcribed God’s talk and later compared notes for accuracy. My father was used to be one of them.’” – Tomoji Takano, (*Gozonmei-no-Koro, Volume II of II*, pp. 156-157).

#### VII. “Timely Directions”:

1. “The ‘Timely Talk’ was actively delivered at each occasion as though a dam had broken as the desire for the single-hearted salvation in the heart of God the Parent became filled to its brim.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 42).

Timely directions, I do not give at random. When you are at a loss as to what to do, what to do, I give definite directions.

Osashizu, November 3, 1899

「又々旬を見て話し、旬が来たなら刻限という。刻限は旬を外さんための刻限。刻限の話皆伝えて筆に留めてある。なれど、皆外し へ て来た。筆に記しあっても、これは一寸こうして置こうと言うようではどうもならん。ならんからこういう事になる。刻限以ての話、さしづ用いねば、尋ねは要らんもの。」

Osashizu, May 22, 1895

2. “There are many Osashizu that includes prophetic directions on the issues, which were then unimaginable to humans, who cannot foresee the future.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 43).

「さあ へ 刻限というなれども、皆々見えん先に言うのやで。この理をよう聞き分け へ。見えてからこんな事と言うてはならんから、さあ へ 刻限々々と言う」

Osashizu, August 16, 1888

「何が映るやら知らん。何が映るやら。いかなる事も刻限に知らしてある。これよう聞き分けてくれ。これよう思案すれば皆分かる。刻限に知らし置いたる」

Osashizu, October 24, 1892

3. “Naturally, no erroneous teaching is contained in the Timely Talk, and the issue lies on the way and manner in which we interpret and accept them. The most significant, therefore, is for us to accurately understand and carry them out steadily without fail.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 43).

「これまでよりも刻限つかえて へ 知らしとうて へ ならん。刻限延びて へ どうもならん。なれど、刻限の理を論せどもどうもならん。用いる者が無いから、身上さしづにも刻限ちよい へ 混ぜたる。遠い他の事情には混ぜてない。何ぼ刻限にて知らせど、刻限はいずれ へ やろと追いつ延ばすばかりや。そこで俄かの事情、身上のさしづでなけりや論されん。どうも知らされん。よう聞き分け。...」

Osashizu, January 13, 1897

「さあ へ 一寸説いて置くで。さあ へ 刻限々々、刻限遅れると皆遅れる。どきはきの道を通らにゃならん。さあ へ 一時々々心の理によって理が外れる。一つ へ 十分聞き取れ。一度の話は二度はせん。刻限は間違わんで。くどう へ 説いてある。これからは案じる事は無い。刻限聞き通し、見通し、悟りと言う。悟りは言わん。刻限よいよ悟ってならん。刻限に論したる理に理を纏まれば、身が治まる」

Osashizu, March 19, 1893

「詳しい 一 刻限、身の内苦しんで居る処を見て尋ねるは、辛度の上に辛度を掛けるようなもの。刻限という事情納して置いて、人間心で、何にもならん事に目をほし、あゝ目がくたぶれた。何にもならん。刻限事情一寸も違わん。刻限納して、刻限見通し聞き通し、子供のする事が、をやは今まで見て居た聞いて居た。なれど、人間心の理が栄える。それでは見て居られん。刻限を台として始めた道、一名ともいう二名ともいう、又それ 一 ともいう。刻限をよう思やんせよ。それを納して置いて何も尋ねる事要らん。」

Osashizu, November 19, 1892

4. “We, humans, cannot know the arrival of the ‘Time’ until the ‘Timely Talk’ is delivered . . . the ‘Time’ arrived both in day and night regardless of humanly conveniences.” – Shozen Nakayama, (*Hitokotobanashi Volume II*, p. 119).

#### IX. The “Osashizu in response to Inquiries”:

1. “Not only on various church issues, it seems that they looked to the Osashizu on matters of an individual’s illness and troubles however trifling they were.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Jyo*, p. 47).

##### 刻限御話

「さあ 一 身の内にどんな障りが付いても、これはという事がありても、案じるではない。神が入り込み、皆為す事や」

Osashizu, March 4, 1887

##### 刻限御話

「さあ 一 身の内の障り、痛み悩みは神の手引とも諭したる。さあ 一 楽しめ 一。心の理は受け取りてある」

Osashizu, March 18, 1895

2. “The Osashizu delivered in response to an individual’s issues are construed as practical directions from God the Parent. Therefore, to understand those Osashizu, we must, as a matter of proper procedure, consider the situation of the time when the Osashizu were delivered.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Jyo*, p. 48).

3. “However, it does not mean that those Osashizu are meaningful only to the people of that time and place.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 49).

Sah, sah, on your question . . . Sah, sah, My directions are unchanging.  
My directions will never change. With one instruction, I teach a lifetime  
of truths.

Osashizu, May 1, 1896

4. “Although these Osashizu were delivered in response to concrete situations of an individual’s illness or troubles, they are the truth that remains everlasting over and beyond those situations. They are the guiding principle to the truth, to which we humans must always look up.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 50).

増野道興二三日前よりだん 〱 目が塞がり願

「小人という、目という、開かんというは、これ必ず案じてくれるな。内々  
大変案じる。案じる事は無い。世界救ける事から思えば、案じる事は無い」

Osashizu, March 5, 1894

X. There are Osashizu where the “Timely Directions” were delivered during the “Osashizu in response to Inquiries” and where the contents of the “Osashizu was in response to Inquiries” being that of the “Timely Directions.”

1. “Through the pressing situation of an individual’s illness, it was urged to seriously follow the Directions.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 51).

清水與之助おたすけに行き御利益もあり、帰り道にて、左の足に何とな  
く出物でけ、喉ひっ付くように成りしに付願

「さあ 〱 万事の処、大勢寄り合うて、幾重の話しても、一人々々の精  
神より運ぶ事は出けぬ。この理をよう聞き分け。刻限話では一人々々聞  
きようが違ふ。それで刻限話もせぬ。一人々々の身の障りより願い出でば、  
それ 〱 聞かす。この理をよう聞き分け。暗がりに成る者もある。身の  
処何にも案じる事は要らん」

Osashizu, October 22, 1887

2. “The majority of the Osashizu delivered in response to Honseki’s illness are instructions that concern the Path as a whole. They should, thus, be construed as the “Timely Directions” rather than the Osashizu in response to Inquiries.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 52).

宮森ヒサ眼の障り願

「席に身上ちよいへ 刻限論そと思えども、どうもならん。そこでちよいへ 身上からのさしづ。順序尋ねから論した理もある。さしづこうやけど、どうもなあ、と言うようでは、天の理に背く。教祖一つの理にも背く」

Osashizu, December 29, 1899

#### XI. Various Issues on Osashizu Study:

1. “We cannot negate the errors by ‘missing of some words,’ ‘mishearing,’ ‘leaving something out by mistake,’ or ‘writing incorrectly’ by transcribers.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 54).

2. “The preserved written materials did not necessarily have punctuations. The punctuations you see in the present Osashizu books are inserted in the process of compilation.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 54).

3. “In understanding the Osashizu, one must consider the historical situation and backgrounds of the time.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 55).

4. “The Ofudesaki, as the dogmatic book of revelation, must be consulted in the understanding of the Osashizu.” – Kunio Yamamoto & Hideo Nakajima, (*Osashizu Kenkyuu-Iyo*, p. 55).

## Section Summary Report

Organizer: Takayuki Onoue

The speaker, Rev. Hiroshi Fukaya, focused on the second session of the seated service, “*Choto Hanashi*,” and shared his own interpretations and thoughts of the meaning in relation with its hand movements. The points he mentioned included: the issue of who the subject is (God or human being), translation of “heaven and earth,” and several other interpretations in connection with songs and hand movements. Thus, he tried to help the audience reconfirm the significance of the Mikagura-uta as one of the Tenrikyo Scriptures.

### Questions & Answers/Discussion Session One

(Questions, comments, or opinions regarding Rev. Fukaya’s presentation.)

Question: Should the Mikagura-uta be sung in Japanese? (This question was raised by Rev. Fukaya in the end of his presentation.)

Opinions from participants:

-As long as the tune and the melody are kept same, there should be no problem in singing in other languages.

-Even if we sing in other languages, we can unite our mind as one.

-To become more familiar with the Mikagura-uta, the translation into other languages is indispensable and singing in those languages should be acceptable.

-What is the most important is how well we, God’s children, can communicate with the Parent, God the Parent.

-We should further update the translation of the Mikagura-uta, and then we can find a way of solving this question.

-For Japanese people, to sing the Mikagura-uta is no problem, but it is so difficult for those who do not understand Japanese language.

-Rev. Fukaya’s interpretations of the second session of the seated service are very unique, understandable, and eye opening.

The speaker, Rev. Tsunenori Ichise, passed out a concise and thorough handout. He started his speech with a story of lantern as a metaphor and stated that the Scriptures as a lantern to light the path are indispensable to seek for

the “true joy” and what made the lantern most durable was the understanding of the original Scriptures. Then, while referring to the handout, he picked up various important points of the Osashizu such as “What is Osashizu?” “The Period the Osashizu was delivered,” “Publication of the Osashizu,” “The Significance of the Osashizu,” “Who transcribed the Osashizu?” “Various Issues on Osashizu Study” and so on.

#### Questions & Answers/Discussion Session Two

(Questions, comments, or opinions to Rev. Ichise’s presentation.)

Question: Now I have understood the importance of the Osashizu, but why cannot the translation of the scripture advance further? Are there any hesitations to go forward?

Ichise: There are many difficulties to further translating the Osashizu as follows: We need to grasp the situations behind the Osashizu to translate it. There are many dialects, which are very difficult to understand and interpret. Yet, we do not hesitate to promote the translation. Rather, we are in a process of furthering it.

Question: How important is the Osashizu, compared to the other two Scriptures?

Ichise: We can read in no. 14 in section G of the handout: “The Second Shinbashira, at the International Association for the History of Religions, shared his thoughts . . . the ‘Mikagura-uta’ provides guidance of life and soul, the ‘Ofudesaki’ provides dogmatic foundation, the ‘Story of Creation’ reveals the mystic truth, and the ‘Osashizu’ provides practical guidance . . .”

Question: Are there many commentaries or guidebooks in Japanese?

Ichise: We have some books available in Japanese, but not so many.

Question: Why do various lecturers quote from several Osashizu even though it is said that the Osashizu is difficult to be interpreted?

Ichise: Some Osashizu are very clear in terms of its interpretation and background and have been already translated. Lecturers are quoting only such Osashizu as a reference. But again, the number is quite limited.

Question: Some Osashizu seems very clear for us to understand while others seem very difficult to understand. Is it a matter of writing style or a matter of the Japanese language itself? Was this a specific intention of Oyasama?

Ichise: Most of Osashizu seem very difficult to understand and I have no idea why they are so. Many Osashizu are responding to inquiries concerning various issues, but we should understand them as not just for the person concerned but for all people, and as everlasting.

#### Organizer's Comments

In this section meeting, I believe that we could reconfirm the significance of the Mikagura-uta and the Osashizu as planned and expected. We learned many new things through two presentations, which were given by Rev. Fukaya and Rev. Ichise, and shared many opinions and thoughts. Rev. Fukaya gave us his own new interpretations of the second section of the seated service, while Rev. Ichise provided us with a clue and a starting point of studying and understanding the Osashizu. It is our hope that this session will be of some help for the participants to become more familiar with the Scriptures and enhance the regular use of the Scriptures in daily life.

## The Service Requires Our Faith and Our Faith Requires the Service

Motokiyo Fukaya, Ph.D.

(Rev. Motokiyo Fukaya is the chairman of the Tenrikyo Yamatoyoki Young Men's Association and a part-time lecturer at Tenri University)

Welcome back to Jiba! My Name is Motokiyo Fukaya. It is my honor to have an opportunity to hold a short presentation about the Service in front of you. Maybe this will be nothing new to you, but at the least, I hope that my presentation will warm you up for a nice discussion to be held afterward.

The Name of God the Parent and Relying on this God

As you may know, the Service is a translation of the Japanese word *tsutome*.<sup>1</sup> *Tsutome* generally means a job, work or office. Each of us has our own job, work or office according to our situation or position. It could be a professional one like that of a doctor, or a daily one like that of a housekeeper. But, as a human being, especially when we recognize that every human being is a child of God the Parent, we notice that there is a job, work or office for God the Parent, just as every child has their job for their parent—that is, namely, to rely on them and to pray for help.

We don't hesitate to admit that the people already knew the idea of prayer before the founding of Tenrikyo. We know that, throughout history, many people have been praying all over the world to many different kinds of gods. These gods could sometimes be a god of health, when the people were sick, or it could be a god of agriculture, when they wanted a rich harvest. But the people did not know why, or from whom they were saved by; they were simply satisfied through their prayers being answered. It was only after God the Parent became revealed through Oyasama that we, for the first time in history, learned the divine name Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, which refers to the real Savior—the one who had answered the people's sincere prayers ever since the beginning of human history.

It is said that fifteen years<sup>2</sup> after this revelation of God the Parent, Oyasama, then fifty-six years old, sent her daughter, Kokan, then seventeen, to spread this

<sup>1</sup> Nakayama, Shoen. *Zoku Hitokotobanashi Sono 2*. rev. 1989, p. 109.

<sup>2</sup> 1853, 16<sup>th</sup> year of Tenrikyo

divine name, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, into the city of Osaka. But we can assume that it took a couple of years until people came to know and use this divine name in prayer, because we find that the first historical record—which tells us that one of our predecessors, Rev. Chusaku Tsuji, prayed to the God in the name of Tenri-O-no-Mikoto—took place ten years after Kokan's visit to Osaka (1863, F26, O66).<sup>3</sup> Of course Oyasama did not just wait during these 10 years (which was also a seriously troublesome decade for her and her family), but she continued to teach the people to recognize the real God and rely on this true God.

She taught us this importance of reliance on God especially through the Grant of Safe Childbirth. She said to one of the villagers:

You must forget all human concern. Rely on God the Parent and have a delivery free from worry.<sup>4</sup>

Because of the marvelous protection of the Grant of Safe Childbirth, Oyasama was recognized gradually as a “goddess of safe childbirth of Shoyashiki Village,” and ultimately, as a living goddess who also saves other serious cases. However, doesn't it surprise us to notice that almost half the fifty years of her Divine Model had already passed by this moment? Do you think that it took too long for the people to believe in God the Parent? On the other hand, perhaps this fact could cheer up people who engage in missionary work, confronting the difficulty of letting the people know about and believe in God. Either way, what I want to point out first in this presentation, is the fact that Oyasama seemed to begin to teach the Service only after these conditions were met—namely only after people began to know the name of God the Parent and began to rely on God the Parent.

#### Faith as Working for God the Parent

In other words, after the divine name of Tenri-O-no-Mikoto became well-known and many people began to pray to it, Oyasama seemed to start to find, or perhaps it is better to say she started to make, someone amongst these people,

<sup>3</sup> “F + number” means the year since the founding of Tenrikyo and “O + number” means the age of Oyasama.

<sup>4</sup> Tenrikyo Church Headquarters. *The Life of Oyasama, Foundress of Tenrikyo*—Manuscript Edition. 3rd ed. Tenri: Tenrikyo Church Headquarters, 1996, p. 29.

who will not only pray for a help, but also work (*tsutomeru*) for God the Parent. The anecdotes tell us that Oyasama said to some of the people, not to worry about their own or their families' illnesses, because it was just a divine guidance to come to hear<sup>5</sup> the divine teachings.

For example, the anecdotes<sup>6</sup> tell us that, on May 6, 1861, a woman named Koto Nishida (32) visited Oyasama (64) because she had a toothache. Oyasama said to her:

Welcome home. I have been waiting for you . . . I have given you guidance by a slight illness only.

Then, Oyasama told her the divine teachings and gave her the sacred powder of roasted grain. The anecdotes tell us further, that by the time this woman got home after listening to the divine teachings, the toothache had completely stopped. But as she did not pay a visit to Oyasama for some days, she got another illness. And as she visited Oyasama for the second time, she would be told again:

I have given you guidance through an illness.

Then, Oyasama taught her the divine teachings step by step again, and prayed for her. Once again, her pain stopped by the time she left to go home. Finally, the anecdotes tell us that she visited Oyasama for the following three days, bringing lunch with her and cleaning the Residence. This was recognized as the beginning of her faith in Tenrikyo. From this case and from other similar cases seen in the anecdotes, we can say that our faith is not just to believe in God and rely on God; we should also listen to the teachings, try to understand the divine reason and change our minds according to it, so that our actions will also change. In other words, if we listen to the teaching and really understand them, there's no way we can stop working for God the Parent, whose main work is to save all human beings. So, what I want to point out secondly in my presentation is that, it was under this condition, or it was to these dedicated followers<sup>7</sup>, that

5 Tenrikyo Church Headquarters. *Anecdotes of Oyasama, the Foundress of Tenrikyo*—Manuscript Edition. Tenri: Tenrikyo Church Headquarters, 1976, pp. 4-5.

6 Ibid. pp. 4-5.

7 We find the first records of Tenrikyo followers, who left behind a reputation as a

Oyasama taught the Service. Theoretically, Oyasama could have taught the Service earlier, but it seems that She had waited until the ideal follower(s) would appear—followers who would not only pray for help, but work for God as well. In other words, the Service requires the people's faith, which can be acquired through hearing and understanding the teachings.

#### The Service and the Faith in Meiji 20

Perhaps it is only because the Service was to be performed by the people with strong faith (who not only pray to be saved, but also pray to contribute to save the others) that Oyasama could have asked for the Service to be performed, even under the difficult conditions. From another point of view, perhaps we can say that Oyasama desired the people to perform the Service under the difficult conditions, so that their faith would grow stronger through the experience. We find the best example for this in Meiji 19-20, when God the Parent hastens the Service, the path of single-hearted salvation, by showing the people a disorder in the body of Oyasama<sup>8</sup>. It was a seriously troublesome situation, under which the people were requested to do the Service. When they perform the Service, the police would come and arrest the then ninety year-old Oyasama, their Savior. What we should not overlook is that the people here who were hastened to do the Service, were not the people who wanted to be saved themselves, but the people who knew the teachings of God the Parent and who already began to work for God. However, although these people worked hard for God the Parent under several difficult conditions, which in itself is an admirable fact, they seemed to have worked principally according to Oyasama's direct instructions. Now, with Oyasama arrested by the police, they were requested to work without receiving these directions<sup>9</sup>. They were simply requested to ponder deeply over the teachings and find the right direction themselves. The message is exactly what the last verse of the Ofudesaki tells us:

predecessor, as I said before, only after almost half of the 50 years Divine Model is passed. But it doesn't mean that Oyasama didn't tell the teachings before. She seems already to have taught the divine teachings earlier and there could be more earlier followers, whose name we just don't know. But, what we can say is that these earlier followers didn't leave anything behind as a predecessor, although we should not overlook the fact that they fulfilled their mission as a guide to the early predecessors.

8 Cf. Tenrikyo Church Headquarters. *The Life of Oyasama, Foundress of Tenrikyo*—Manuscript Edition. 3rd ed. Tenri: Tenrikyo Church Headquarters, 1996, p. 222.

9 Ibid. p. 223.

I earnestly request each and everyone of you  
to ponder deeply over these teachings

Ofudesaki XVII:75

We know for a fact that our predecessors have pondered deeply enough,  
through the following words of God the Parent:

Sah, sah, you have discussed thoroughly, thoroughly. For the first time  
since the Residence began, you have discussed thoroughly. It has been  
accepted fully.

Osashizu, January 24, 1887

And we also know that through this deep pondering they showed their deep  
faith, which is represented in the following words of the first Shinbashira:

Only those should perform who are willing to risk their lives no matter  
what measures the police use to stop the Service.<sup>10</sup>

Finally what I want to point out in this presentation, is the fact that the last  
Service, which was performed in Oyasama's Divine Model, was the Service in  
which the followers decided to perform on their own accord, only after they  
had pondered deeply over the teachings and deepened their faith.

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p. 237.

## Performance of the Service Everyday Brings Joy of Life

Shinichiro Tsuji

(Mr. Tsuji is a staff member of Tenrikyo Church Headquarters and works at the Overseas Department, Translation Section)

First of all, thank you very much for attending Tenri Forum 2006. In this section meeting about the service, Rev. Motokiyo Fukaya shared with you about the relationship between faith and performance of the service. He touched on the fact that Oyasama started teaching the service twenty-five years after she became the Shrine of God. Oyasama taught the service when the followers were spiritually ready to learn. Also, I would like to mention Mrs. Louise Sasaki's plenary address. She shared with us a great many examples of how the service helps us in our daily lives. Her presentation of the service conveyed everything you need to know, so there is no need to give my presentation. But since we have a video crew filming this section meeting, I better give my presentation now. So, may I ask for your kind attention.

What is the Service?

When we read the Ofudesaki, the word "Service" is always written with a capital "S." That is because the main objective of the book is to hasten the completion of the Service, particularly the Kagura Service. You can find this point in many books, including *Yoboku's Guide to Tenrikyo*.

The very first time the word "Service" appears in the Ofudesaki is in the following verse:

When all are assembled and quickly do the Service, as those  
close to Me become spirited, God, also, will be spirited.

Ofudesaki I:11

God the Parent has been urging human beings to perform the Service. And when we become spirited, God the Parent assures us that God will become spirited. And that is a wonderful news!

In preparing to teach you the Service step by step,  
I shall sweep clean everyone's innermost heart

Ofudesaki VII:95

If only the Service is done without error,  
the Gift of Heaven, also, will be given without fail

Ofudesaki X:34

God the Parent desires to sweep the minds of all people in the world and prepare them to perform the Kagura Service. When we perform the Kagura Service as desired by God the Parent, then, as assured in the verse I just read, the Gift of Heaven will be handed to us, guaranteed. Now, this sounds like a super special souvenir to me, and this gift will be given to us 100%.

When we followers use the word "service" in our daily life, only in limited occasions we are talking about the Kagura Service performed around the Jiba. I would say that in most cases, we are talking about monthly services performed at churches, the morning and evening services we perform daily, or prayer services for better health and salvation from troubles. It is my desire to increase an awareness of the importance of daily performance of the service, therefore, when I say "service" in this presentation, it means the seated service some of us perform daily.

#### Meaning of Performing the Service Daily

At local churches as well as at our houses, Tenrikyo followers perform the service everyday. Well actually, not every single day for some followers. Every week? For some of you in this room, it may be only once every month? At any rate, I believe that all of you in this room have an understanding that the followers of the path perform the seated service everyday to express our appreciation to God the Parent. Whether we do so or not is beyond the scope of my speech, but we may share our thoughts during the group discussion.

Recently, I had an opportunity to listen to a lecture by a former head minister of a grand church who is also a Honbu-in. He said that having faith in Oyasama's teachings is nothing complicated. All you need to do is: (1) sweep away your dust of mind, and (2) rely on God the Parent wholeheartedly. Sweep your mind on a consistent basis, and rely on God. That is all, and it is very simple.

If you are familiar with the Divine Model of Oyasama, you would agree with me that Oyasama had never engaged in rigorous, physically demanding trainings to become awakened to the intention of God the Parent. She never demanded our predecessors of the path to undergo rigorous trainings or meditate for a long time. And we do not ask *Shuyoka* (Spiritual Development Course of Church Headquarters) students to engage in physically and psychologically exhausting activities to learn the intention of God the Parent. That is not how we followers of the path settle God the Parent's intention.

Also, our predecessors of the path did not “study” the teachings before they become convinced of the teachings. This may sound ridiculous, but none of them tried to replicate the reported cases of miraculous salvation through empirical research studies. I have never heard of a follower compiling data to verify parts of Oyasama's teachings or how the administration of the Sazuke works on healing illnesses.

One of the things that Oyasama asked them to do is to perform the service. And the reason for this is to sweep the dust of the mind, to make our minds clean. Then, we can become more aware of the blessings we have already received from God the Parent.

As for our predecessors, they administered the Sazuke for people suffering from illness and prayed for their well-being. Going back to the lecture by the Honbu-in, he said that it is very important to truly understand what we are doing when we perform the service everyday. So let us take a closer look at the meaning of the songs.

*Ashiki o harote tasuke tamae Tenri-O-no-Mikoto.*

Yes, it means to sweep the dust away, please save us, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto. Sweep your dust, ask God to save all people of the world, and call out the name of God, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto.

This service is not about me, me, me. Not about “Please save me from hardships.” Not about asking God to fix your problems. And when you sing this verse, you must mean “Please save us,” not “Please improve my life.” You have to mean it if you sing the verse to God the Parent, and especially, when you perform the service in front of the Kanrodai. You can't just say and do the hand movements while being unaware of what you are saying to the true Parent.

Sweep clean your mind 21 times.

Pray for the salvation of all human beings in the world 21 times

Asking this of Jesus? Of course not. Asking Tenri-O-no-Mikoto, or God the Parent.

Same things hold true with “*sekikomu*.”

Sweep clean your mind 3 times.

Verbalize your recognition of God the Parent’s hastening for the salvation all human beings 3 times.

Pray for the mind of all human beings to be purified equally,

Kanrodai. Affirm the truth of the Kanrodai, 3 times.

And you repeat this process three times, bowing your head to God the Parent after each set to show sincerity, to express your respect to God. Again, when you perform the service, you are actually asking for these things. Not just showing your appreciation for a thing lent, a thing borrowed. Far more profound messages are contained in the seated service.

So, now you know that the first step is to sweep away the dusts of the mind in front of God the Parent. All of us need to remove accumulated dusts and immerse ourselves in the parental love of God the Parent in order to perceive our life from God the Parent’s perspective. I just want to remind you that such a perspective is very different from the more familiar outlook of life based on human thinking.

This human thinking may be nice and comfortable simply because that has been the way we have conducted our life for a long, long time. Also, we get something out of human thinking, even though it may only be short-term gains. Surely, human thinking is very familiar and feels right despite some inconveniences and troubles it would bring. But such a small and limited way of thinking does not lead to the path of the Joyous Life. It only leads to a path full of dismay and potential disasters. Why? Because you are using a wrong kind of guide, not the dependable guide we are taught to use, meaning the Divine Model of Oyasama. Using a wrong guide is a sure way to make wrong choices, which lead to wrong decisions, which results in a disastrous life.

So, next time you perform the service, please pay close attention to the meaning of the songs, and when you sweep your chest, please be conscious

of the meaning of that particular motion. You are asking God the Parent to sweep your dust. You are not asking your roommate to clean your mess. You are asking God the Parent. When we perform the seated service, we are reaffirming our personal relationship with God the Parent. That is why I am suggesting you do so everyday.

At this moment, I would like to share with you about a follower whose family member was saved through the daily performance of the service. Let me read that part from *The Life of Oyasama, Foundress of Tenrikyo*.

It was on March 4, 1863, that Chusaku Tsuji came to worship for the first time. When an inquiry was made of Oyasama concerning the insanity of his younger sister, Kura, She responded:

Here dwells the Supreme God of all directions, whose name is Tenri-O-no-Mikoto. Though it will not be cured as swiftly as an empty stomach is filled with rice, it will subside day by day.

Returning home, Chusaku performed the service morning and evening, beating the wooden clappers while chanting the name of God the Parent over and over again, as he had been taught:

*Namu, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto! Namu, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto!*

But his prayers had no effect on his insane sister. So one day he returned and an inquiry was made of Oyasama as to why his sister had shown no improvement. The reply was:

The service is too short.

These words struck Chusaku, and he recalled that he had not been burning an entire incense stick to measure the length of his service, but only one-half, purposely breaking the stick in two . . . This was before the hand movements had been introduced into the service and the number of its repetitions prescribed.

Chusaku, realizing his fault, apologized at once and returned to his

home. After that, he performed the service every morning and evening enthusiastically, without breaking the incense sticks. Then his sister, Kura, began to make a gradual recovery, till at last she was restored to sanity.

*The Life of Oyasama*, pp. 36-37

So his half-hearted performance of the service was met by the most concise admonition by Oyasama I am aware of, “The service is too short.” And how did Chusaku respond to this admonition? He realized his fault and resolved his mind to perform the service exactly as taught by Oyasama. Sure enough, his diligent performance of the service everyday resulted in his sister slowly regaining her mental health. This must have brought tremendous joy to the family. The point of this anecdote is how important the service is, and when you perform the prayer service with a sincere mind, God the Parent will surely accept your sincerity and provide you with miraculous blessings.

After seeing his sister being saved, did Chusaku Tsuji become an ardent follower of Tenrikyo? Did he perform the service diligently after that? Some of you may have guessed it right. That was not the case.

Toward the middle of July 1863, when Yoshimatsu, the eldest son of Chusaku Tsuji, was four years old, his face became pale and he was in danger of death. Oryu, Chusaku’s mother, came to pray, carrying her sick grandchild on her back. Oyasama saw them and said:

His parents should bring him instead.

So Masu, Chusaku’s wife, carrying the boy on her back, came to pray.

“I will save the child according to the parents’ minds,” was the teaching of Oyasama. The boy was completely restored to health in four or five days.

*Anecdotes of Oyasama*, no. 9 “According to The Parent’s Minds”

Now, I want to make a few points. First, this anecdote took place on July 1863, four months after Chusaku’s first visit to the Residence, and probably less than three months after his sister got well. My second point is that Oyasama asked “parents” to bring Yoshimatsu next time, not his grandma. And who

brought him for the second time? Masu, Chusaku's wife, carried Yoshimatsu on her back and visited the Residence. And for some reasons, Chusaku was absent.

Now, please keep in mind that Chusaku's dear child was on brink of death. Also, he knew from recent experience that it was *his* daily performance of the service that resulted in Oyasama's admonition, followed by a miraculous salvation of his sister's mental illness. It probably took only about ten minutes to walk from Chusaku's house to the Residence. Yet, he did not accompany his mother the first time. He did not carry his son on his back and ask Oyasama for the salvation of his son's life. He did not accompany his wife even after Oyasama asked the couple to visit. Despite the reasons I just listed for him to see Oyasama, Chusaku did not go to the Residence. It has been said that Chusaku was not yet convinced of the truth of the service at that point. He was yet to be awakened to the truth.

I have read in several books that after this point, he stopped visiting the Residence for approximately two years because he believed that Oyasama was the God of safe childbirth and smallpox. I had difficulty believing this part because Chusaku had first-hand experiences of the amazing salvation of his sister's mental disorder and his son's sudden and life threatening illness, both of which are unmistakably different from childbirth or smallpox.

Chusaku was drawn to the path again after he experienced an unbearable toothache, visited the Residence, was saved from the toothache and finally awakened to the truth that God the Parent is indeed God of Origin, God in Truth. Despite his earlier mistaken belief, Chusaku eventually became an ardent follower who was willing to risk his life to perform the Service on January 26, 1887. Oyasama must have been very patient. Not just patient, but she lovingly embraced and guided this non-complying and hard to convince follower. I am not sure if I could convey the importance of the service to such a rebellious and ungrateful follower who had a history of intentionally shortening the service performance because he would rather work in the field for an abundant harvest, and later strayed away from the path because he mistakenly believed that Oyasama was "the God of childbirth." Through Oyasama's patient and loving guidance, he became convinced of the truth of the service that he performed the Service, willingly risked his reputation, his social status, even his life. I believe that we still have a lot to learn from the Divine Model of Oyasama.

### A Recent Incident

I want to share something that happened to me recently. Earlier this month (July 2006), I went to the Main Sanctuary, East Worship Hall to be precise, to perform the morning service. I felt good, singing along with the Shinbashira's wooden clappers. It always feels good when I sing in unison with other followers, singing along to the rhythm of the Shinbashira.

After the service, I paid my respects to Oyasama and at the Memorial Shrine then I bowed my head to the Shinbashira, the former Shinbashira, and Honbu-in heading to the Foundress' Sanctuary. It was at that moment when a man in his sixties tapped my right shoulder. As soon as our eyes met, he said, "Mr. Tsuji. Your singing is just annoying!"

His eyes seethed with anger, "Your voice is loud and carries well. But your tempo is OFF. Your delay in singing Tenri-O-no-Mikoto is just annoying."

Despite my immediate reaction to do something else, I succeeded in calmly nodding to his unfriendly comments. This man added a few more comments, but none of those registered in my mind. I could not listen to him anymore although I nodded to him. At that point, I just knew that the crux of the problem was his brain, not my singing. But my gut was full of wrath.

Still fuming from this incident, I went home and told my wife what just took place at the Main Sanctuary. After hearing everything I had to say, she asked me, "Did you apologize to him?" That caught me completely off guard. I just told her that I had done nothing wrong, so there was no need to apologize to him. Rather, HE should apologize to ME for causing me to accumulate dust of anger.

The next morning, the man was sitting about 5 to 6 meters in front of me. I noticed that my voice was quieter than the day before. I kept checking in my head if my singing was off tempo. After the service, I asked my brother who was sitting next to me, "Was my singing off tempo from the Shinbashira's rhythm?" My brother said, "It did not sound like your tempo was off." Now that kind of reassurance was what I truly needed. My brother always speaks straight, so I knew that I could trust what he said. I knew that the old man was wrong. Most likely, he had mistaken my voice for that of some *Kentei* (Head Minister Qualification Course) students sitting around him.

Later that day, I wondered if that was all to the incident which caused my temper to boil over. Why did God the Parent have to show me such an

incident at the Main Sanctuary? What kind of seeds have I sown recently to hear such rude, insensitive comments? And it suddenly dawned on me that God the Parent's message was not about this instructor. It was about me. "It has to be my bad-mouthing of a few people with whom I strongly disagree. That instructor's attitude was God the Parent's warning of my bad-mouthing, making disparaging comments about others."

I interpreted that my bad-mouthing caused my breath to acquire bad fragrance, and that odor must be irritating whenever I talk with someone. When I understood the divine message, instead of harboring resentment toward that old man, I considered him a messenger sent by Oyasama.

Oyasama once said to a follower:

When someone insults you, please bow your head to his back in showing your respect while going about your life. Then that person would remove your *innen* (causality), thus becoming a person who actually saves your life.

「ひとが悪口をいうたら、その人の後姿を拝んで通るのやで。そうしたら、そのものが、こちらの因縁を取ってくださる、恩人となるのやで」

*Shiawase no Yobu Kokoro*, p. 13

Now, do I still consider him my lifesaver? No. That is something very, very difficult to do. I am a man and nobody can insult me like that without consequences. But for a few moments, I felt my mind being cleaner than before, thanks to the daily performance of the service. At least, I do not resent his insulting comments now.

And another important thing about the service is to sing in a harmonious way. It is important to sing in the same tempo with the wooden clappers. In this case, to the rhythm of the Shinbashira's. By doing so, sometimes I feel like I am building a rapport with him during the service, and ultimately, establishing a rapport with God the Parent. I am aligning myself to the intention of my spiritual parent, and ultimately, the true Parent of all human beings.

#### The Importance of the Service

Earlier, I said that when we perform the service, we sweep clean our mind

21 times and pray for the salvation of all human beings to God the Parent. I also added that for *sekikomu*, we verbalize the recognition of God the Parent's hastening of the world salvation, pray for equal purification of the mind of all human beings and this will be achieved through the truth of Kanrodai.

When we perform the service everyday, we connect our mind to God the Parent and to the Jiba. We reaffirm in the seated service that the Jiba, the Kanrodai is the center of our faith and the original source for creating the Joyous Life.

In summary, we do three things in our daily performance of the service. First of all, we express our gratitude for daily blessings we receive in our silent prayer before the performance of the service. Usually for the health of our family, for our occupation, and for well-beings of our friends, followers connected to our church, etc. Second, we reflect on our use of mind, repent our misuse of mind, sweep our mind, and pledge to God the Parent to make a fresh start. Third, we pray to God the Parent to continue guiding us toward the Joyous Life.

### Conclusion

If a child is still small, being able to take care of yourself would bring praise from his parents. For example, being able to change clothes on his own, putting his dirty dishes in the sink, or doing homework before his parents even mention would delight and make his parents proud of him. But as this boy reaches adolescence, doing the same things would not be enough to bring joy. Instead, that would actually anger his parents for being self-centered.

If all you do is just take care of ourselves, you will be scolded. Why? Because you are not making any contribution to the well-being of others, especially those who could use your help. In order to bring joy and make your parent proud of you, take initiatives to make a difference in other people's lives. Be a role model in taking good care of yourself AND making contributions to the community.

And to become that role model, there is something all of us should do first. What is that first step? You guessed it right! Perform the service everyday. Be aware of the meanings of the songs and the hand motions. Ask God the Parent to continue guiding all people of the world toward the Joyous Life. That, I say, is how we make a difference in this chaotic world.

## Section Summary Report

Organizers: Shinichiro Tsuji and Motokiyo Fukaya

### 1. Discussion

Although a Q&A session was originally planned, the participants instead decided to share their views on what motivates (or, in some cases, discourages) service performances, as well as their opinions on what it means to perform the service daily.

The following comments, in no particular order, were shared during the session:

“Performing the seated service is my commitment to be a Tenrikyo follower.”

“I understand that it is important to sweep away the dust of the mind. However, such an action sounds too negative to me. There is nothing positive or proactive about sweeping away the dust of my mind. Instead, I want to learn something more positive. I want to learn the positive aspects of service performance—a positive change of my mind frame.”

“I perform the service because God requests us to do so. That is what I learned in *Shuyokai* (Spiritual Development Course at Mission Headquarters)—the importance of the service. I now sincerely believe that the service is God’s request. That is why I do the service.”

“The reason to do the Kagura Service is clear. And the reason for the daily service is to be aware of the reason of borrowing the body from God the Parent. Daily performance of the service is not limited to the Jiba. Service can be performed any where, at any time. Since I am a head minister, I always beat wooden clappers for the service every day. Because I only perform the wooden clappers in daily service [laugh], I have no opportunity to sweep away my dust. That gesture is not a part of my service. So, I continue to accumulate the dust of the mind.”

“As a head minister of a church, it is my duty to do the daily service. Also, it is a form of communication with God the Parent. For example, I express my gratitude [through the service]. As Mr. Tsuji said, it is important to use the hands [in a sweeping motion], because all of us tend to forget the meaning of the service [which is to sweep away the dusts]. This is the same with followers

at my church. Because I ask my followers to do the musical instruments, they forget about one aspect of the service, which is to sweep away the dust of the mind. So I am going to share this with my followers and maybe I can emphasize this aspect a little bit more.”

“I just do the service. When I perform the seated service, my mind is very clear. Then something happens, such as getting a sign from God the Parent—it could be an image, a sound, a sensation. Service is a way of communication with God the Parent.”

“I believe that the service is the easiest way to follow Oyasama’s Divine Model. God is always prepared to help us. We should believe in the miracles, which will be realized through the Kagura Service. Miraculous salvation from illnesses and troubles—even the eternal life!”

“*Hinagata* consists of fundamental patterns, or “*kata*.” *Kata* is important to repeat, because through repetition of the correct *kata*, you will acquire skills. That is the surest way to live the Joyous Life, and one of the *kata* is the service.”

“The daily service is an individual prayer and a personal dialogue with God, whereas the monthly service aims at universal salvation.”

“Because the words of the service are in Japanese, it doesn’t directly connect with my heart—unless I think the words of the service in German. I am a native German speaker. In my head, I understand all of the meanings of the songs for the service, but because of the language barrier, I just cannot think and feel what the service is. The meanings of the service just do not reach my heart.”

“This is my first visit to Tenri, and what really caught my attention was the service, especially the hand movements. I like the service because it takes you out of the daily flow of life, and realigns your perspective. I think it is neat to have that kind of opportunity, particularly because the movements of the service are like sign language, and as I learn it, I ask myself its meaning. I figure out the genius of Oyasama—she taught us the service, which consists not only of the songs, but also of the hand motions, so that, for example, even the deaf can participate in the service.”

“Service is wonderful. It is not meditation, which is too passive to me. I like the service because it is active—this active motion of sweeping the dust away.”

“I had never thought of the meaning of doing the service until my friend asked me. To this day, I cannot fully explain why we do the service.”

“During the service, I do not think. I just follow the service.”

“I was at the evening service last night, and that was the first service in a few years [for me]. I am a Yoboku, but I just don’t see the value in performing the service every day. Although I do not go to church on a regular basis because there are none in the state I live in now, why isn’t the monthly service sufficient?”

“I like to dance. It was good for me, that I was never forced to do the service by my parents. The service is something which I can do for others from the bottom of my heart.”

“I believe that the service performance is essential in my life. The service is the foundation of everything; asking for salvation work, expressing gratitude for my health, asking something about my personal life—everything.”

## 2. Reflections

Shinichiro Tsuji

After learning that there were 24 participants in all, Dr. Fukaya and I had a discussion about the format of a group discussion. Initially, I suggested dividing the group in two in order to allow all participants to voice their opinion. Speaking in front of more than 20 people can be intimidating, especially for non-native English speakers. I also wanted to allow as much time as possible per participant to ensure that everyone would have a chance to voice his/her opinion at least once.

However, Dr. Fukaya suggested having one large group discussion. He argued that 20 people are not that many to run a discussion. For a 60-minute discussion, each participant has three minutes to share his/her idea, which is plenty enough. Besides, having two moderators would ensure a smoother group discussion.

After two short presentations, we assembled in one large group, and attempted a group discussion. However, participants voiced that the topic “daily service performance” was too broad to discuss.

Suggested by Mr. Susumu Yuge, we proceeded to share personal stories about the service for the next 60 minutes. This format ended up allowing all participants an equal opportunity to share their views. One of our goals in

this section meeting was to have all participants share individual stories, and we succeeded in doing so. Also, this format helped shy participants to share their belief with others in a comfortable environment. It was clear whose turn it was to talk, which helped both timid and the outspoken participants in sharing their views.

There were some drawbacks on employing this format. First, we failed to discuss the importance of the service. We merely managed to put various issues on the table, and did not have any time to digest even a portion of them. Although the participants were able to listen and absorb varied perspectives on the service, we could not help participants to deepen the understanding about the daily performance of the service.

Second, I personally regret that those who were not yet convinced of the value of the daily performance of the service had left the room untouched. Some followers argued that the daily performance of the service is seemingly a waste of time. These participants commented that the seated service does not touch their heart, and that they had great difficulties understanding why it is insufficient to simply attend or participate in the Kagura Service and the monthly service at their churches. They had no opportunity to ask questions about the value of the service in our daily life. To this day, the greatest regret that I feel is our failure in conveying the joy of daily service performance. To achieve this goal, I believe the size of group discussions must be much smaller—perhaps with six people per group being the ideal size.

#### Reflection - Motokiyo Fukaya

As Mr. Tsuji said, it is indeed regrettable if there was a participant who did not gain appreciation of the importance of the daily performance of the service.

However, considering the fact that one of the goals for this section meeting was to share individual stories regarding the effectiveness of the service, so as to enable participants to inspire one another, and that this Forum was organized mainly for those who engage in spreading the Tenrikyo teachings all over the world, I believe, aside from the issue on group size, that the following issues need to be brought up:

First, the aim of this section meeting was too vague; thus, we failed in providing a solid theme throughout the presentations and the group discussion.

For example, a participant voiced that “the service” was too broad of a topic to discuss, and asked to narrow the topic of discussion. We then focused the topic on “daily service performance.” However, this topic only focuses on Mr. Tsuji’s presentation, which was not the aim of this section meeting shared by all participants. It seems that not all participants were aware of the goal of this section meeting in the first place.

Second, the transition from presentations to group discussion was not smooth. Part of the problem was that the presenters doubled as discussion facilitators. If presenters served as panelists, and had someone else facilitating discussions, this transition could have been much smoother. In addition, allocating only one hour to discuss “the service” was too ambitious.

Third, we failed to take into consideration the variety of positions and roles held by participants. Some were getting their very first exposure to Tenrikyo, while some were long-time head ministers. Discussing the “service” is hard enough in Japanese. Of course, I do not deny the merit in having non-followers, Yoboku, ministers, and head ministers discussing in a same group. But along with the broadness of the topic, variation in participants’ roles and positions also contributed to the lack of depth in discussions. I avoided dividing the participants into two groups because I was not sure how to divide them based on their roles or their knowledge in the teachings.

Although there were many other problems, overall, the section meeting was a success. Being as it was the very first section meeting of the Tenri Forum, I believe that this meeting served as a good preparation for participants to discuss the various topics to come in the days that followed.

## Toward the Next Milestone

Masafumi Adachi

(Rev. Adachi is a staff member of Tenrikyo Overseas Department and the current head of Tenrikyo Oceania Centre in Brisbane, Australia)

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen! First of all, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for the daily efforts you have been making in the cause of the path in your respective countries and, at the same time, thank you for coming to attend the “Tenri Forum 2006” all the way from every corner of the world.

My name is Masafumi Adachi and I have been asked to talk about the “Sazuke” today. I am head of the Tenrikyo Oceania Centre, which is located in Brisbane, Australia. It was about nine years ago, in 1997, when I left for Australia to work as the head of the Oceania Centre. Before that, I had been working for the Translation Section of the Overseas Mission Department between 1984 and 1996 where I quietly engaged in Arabic translation which was my specialty. As Arabic was then decided to be an unnecessary language in the overseas mission of Tenrikyo, however, I was asked by Rev. Masahiko Ihuri, then head of the Department at that time, to become involved in the Oyasato Seminar, so I also worked for the Seminar as educational staff from 1990 for seven years. Every year, when summer came to Jiba, I became fully involved in the Seminar as if I was a seasonal worker. During the period of the Seminar, everyday I left home before the morning service of Church Headquarters and returned home around midnight. Our neighbours used to say to my wife “Mrs. Adachi, you have a fatherless family, don’t you?”

Many of those with whom I shared summer days in Jiba in the Seminars, including the students, counselors and local staff of those days, have returned to Jiba to attend this “Tenri Forum 2006.” Looking forward to seeing them, I returned to Jiba the day before yesterday from midwinter in Australia. I am now very happy and pleased to see many dear faces amongst you.

The theme I have been given today is the “Sazuke.” When I was asked, I felt that it would be very imprudent for an immature and inexperienced person like me to talk about the “Sazuke” which is regarded as one of the most important elements, the same as the Service, in the practical teachings of

Tenrikyo. However, I finally decided to accept this offer obediently as the task of the Jiba, and am fortunate enough to be talking in front of you now.

Today, I would like to learn about the “Sazuke” together with you once again and consider about what to do to become Yoboku who always use the Sazuke without any hesitation in our daily life.

#### The Sazuke: Its Meaning and Importance in the Teachings

As you know, the Sazuke, or the Divine Grant, is the path of single-hearted salvation which is taught together with the Service through Oyasama out of the parental heart of God the Parent who desired humankind to lead the Joyous Life. The Sazuke that we presently receive is also called the “Sazuke of Hand Dance” or the “Sazuke of *Ashiki-barai*.” It is to be administered to those who are suffering from illness to request God’s blessings of a recovery. According to the historical evidence, however, all of what was bestowed by Oyasama as the “truth of effectiveness” were originally called the “Sazuke,” the Divine Grant, including the “Sazuke of the Fan,” the “Sazuke of Fertilizer,” the “Sazuke of Breath,” the “Sazuke of Water,” and so forth.

In *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, we are also taught: “the Sazuke, the Divine Grant, is the truth of effectiveness bestowed in the cause of single-hearted salvation on those whose minds God the Parent has determined as being sincere.” The “truth of effectiveness” in the above is a blessing that God the Parent bestowed on those who implement single-hearted salvation with the mind of sincerity.

We are also taught that the Sazuke granted to us as the “truth of effectiveness” is called a “traveling expense” when we, Yoboku, walk through the path of single-hearted salvation.

According to *The Life of Oyasama, the Foundress of Tenrikyo*, Oyasama started to bestow the Sazuke of the Fan on devoted followers from the spring of 1864, and then bestowed the Sazuke of Fertilizer by saying, “You will not be able to continue your long journey without traveling expenses. So, I bestow upon you Fertilizer for your traveling expenses.” Needless to say, traveling expenses mean expenses when you travel. However, what is the meaning of the traveling expenses when you travel on this path? For example, when you travel around the world, you cannot go on a journey without traveling expenses such as accommodation fees, transportation fees, etc. Likewise, we could say that the Sazuke is an indispensable one bestowed on the Yoboku when we travel on

this path. In other words, we will be protected to walk on the path without any inconvenience or hardships as long as we Yoboku use the Sazuke as our traveling expenses. When you travel around the world, you are supposed to reduce traveling expenses as much as possible. On the other hand, however, when we travel on this path, we should use the Sazuke as the traveling expense so that as many people as possible can be saved. By so doing, you, yourselves, will be able to be shown more blessings than before. What we have learned from the above is that we should use the Sazuke as many times as we can as the traveling expenses when we keep walking on this path, and that the value of the Sazuke would become high or low depending upon how we receive it. In this regard, the Sazuke is a very important thing which would be a “gift for your country” or a “treasure for your country,” and it is very significant as read in *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*: “The truth of the Sazuke, bestowed on the sincere mind pledged to single-hearted salvation, is a treasure for a lifetime and for eternity.”

It is written in the Ofudesaki:

Until now, when there was illness, you turned to  
doctors and medicine. Though all of you have worried,

From now on, I shall save you from any pains,  
sufferings or tumors by the Breath and the Hand Dance.

Ofudesaki VI:105-106

The terms “Breath” and “Hand Dance” both, needless to say, refer to the truth of the Sazuke. These verses teach us that, though in the past people worried much about illnesses, having nothing to rely on except doctors and medicines, anyone can now receive God the Parent’s blessing of a cure through the truth of the Sazuke no matter what kind of illness including pains, sufferings and tumors one may be suffering from.

However, what we have to keep in mind at this point is that it will never happen that the illness would be cured, or a marvelous blessing of a cure from illness would be shown unconditionally, right after you administer the truth of the Sazuke.

In the next verses of the Ofudesaki continued from the above, we are also taught:

No matter how serious the illness may be,  
I shall save you by the truth of Breath.

When Tsukihi has ascertained your mind's sincerity,  
know that I shall grant you every kind of protection.

Ofudesaki VI:108-109

What we should pay attention to here is that God says, "When Tsukihi has ascertained your mind's sincerity." In other words, God the Parent instructs us that God the Parent will show us a marvelous blessing only if God discerns the mind of sincerity with which a Yoboku prays for the salvation of a person suffering from illness, as well as the mind filled with gratitude in the one to whom the Sazuke is being administered. Therefore, when we Yoboku administer the Sazuke to a sick person with the hope that he is saved by all means, we should whole-heartedly make the sincerest efforts as much as we are able. But it seems difficult how we make it. It is also true that we are not sure to what extent we should exert our utmost sincerity. In other words, even though we believe that we are sincere enough, if it is not sincere in the eyes of God the Parent, then we could not receive God's blessings. In this sense, even if we often administer the Sazuke to those suffering from illness without sincerity, or if we are just satisfied with its administration, then we would not be able to receive a miraculous and marvelous blessing easily.

By the way, the Sazuke we presently receive is allowed to be bestowed on us through the Divine Directions that were delivered through Rev. Izo Iburi, Honseki, or the Main Seat, immediately after Oyasama withdrew from physical life.

Sah, there was a thing I had intended to give to My children but I was not able. I shall bestow this truth on you step by step hereafter. Remember this well.

In this Divine Direction, Oyasama clearly indicated that, remaining everliving to continue to work for us, She will bestow a "thing that She had intended to give to Her children," that is, the Sazuke on us. This enables us to receive the Sazuke even at the present time. Later, the Besseki system was

established. At present, anyone who is seventeen or older is eligible to attend the lectures. By attending the lecture nine times, you are to sweep away the dust of mind and are ready to receive the truth of the Sazuke. The truth of the Sazuke is then bestowed on the mind of sincerity that has been cultivated through attending the Besseki lectures and which desires the salvation of others.

What we have to bear in mind from the above as Yoboku for world salvation is that we should use, as many times as possible, the Sazuke which is bestowed on us as a tool for saving others, not for saving ourselves. Any tool, if you do not use it, would get dirty, stained, and rusty. If you continuously leave it without using it, then it would become unusable and you have to throw it away some day. On the other hand, however, we are taught that the truth of the Sazuke will not become rotten or rusty, but the body of ourselves who received the Sazuke would become rotten or rusty. Let this point be engraved on our mind always.

#### The Administration of the Sazuke and its Difficulties

Up to this point, we have learned the meaning of the Sazuke and its importance in the teachings of Tenrikyo. Now, I would like to start on the subject that really concerns us today based on what I have said.

I think that most of you who are in this room at the moment must be Yoboku, who have already received the Sazuke. You probably have different positions in society such as head ministers of a Tenrikyo church or fellowship, those who work for a company, school teachers, college or high school students and so forth. You are also different in nationality, sex, age, home environment, etc. However, you are all in the same position as Yoboku for world salvation. How often have you administered the Sazuke up to now?

As you know, especially, this year is the year of the 120th Anniversary of Oyasama. In the past three years towards the Anniversary, every Yoboku was supposed to engage in “cultivating the mind of saving others” and “implementing salvation work,” which was the guideline of Instruction Two for the pre-anniversary activities during the ‘three years, one thousand days’ season leading up to the 120th Anniversary of Oyasama. In this manner, I believe that all of you made sincere efforts to a greater or lesser extent in saving others and administering the Sazuke as Yoboku. What do you think?

And now, I would like to ask for help from all of you. Would you please

raise your hand if you administered the Sazuke everyday in the past three years?

How about those who administered the Sazuke every two or three days, please raise your hand?

Then, those who administered the Sazuke about once a week or once in two weeks, please raise your hand.

Next, may I ask you to raise your hand if you administered the Sazuke once a month.

What about those who administered the Sazuke once or twice a year, please raise your hand.

And then, those who administered the Sazuke once or twice in three years, please raise your hand.

Finally, those who have never administered the Sazuke in the past three years, please raise your hand.

Thank you very much, everyone. The result has turned out just as I had expected. There are many people who did not administer the Sazuke so often in the past three years. Why did this happen? Why do you think that most of you did not administer the Sazuke during the season of the anniversary-related activities?

As to the Oceania Region including Australia and New Zealand for which I take responsibility, most of the Yoboku are also not so keen to administer the Sazuke. In our region, there is one church and seven fellowships other than the Oceania Centre. Of course, there are some Yoboku including church and fellowship heads as well as missionaries who have been devotedly engaging in missionary work by administering the Sazuke and received many marvelous blessings of God the Parent, especially right after the pre-anniversary activities for the 120th Anniversary of Oyasama started more than three and a half years ago.

On the other hand, the rest of the Yoboku have not been so keen to implement the administration of the Sazuke although they are aware of the importance of administering the Sazuke. It seems very difficult for them to administer the Sazuke. Why do they feel it is difficult to administer the Sazuke? They might make such excuses like: "I am very busy with my work"; "I am ashamed to administer the Sazuke in front of others"; "It is not easy for me to chant '*Ashiki-barai Tasuke Tamae, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto*' because I cannot speak Japanese"; "There is no one around me who is suffering from illness";

or “I am hesitant to administer the Sazuke because I have no confidence in the effectiveness of my Sazuke.” Before obediently following the voice of the season and implementing the administration of the Sazuke, don’t we tend to look for such excuses like the above? Everyone has the same feeling at the beginning. So did I.

Then, in order to clarify the administration of the Sazuke more clearly, let us compare the Sazuke with the Service which is also taught by Oyasama as the path of single-hearted salvation. It looks rather easier to perform the service than to administer the Sazuke. I believe most of you perform the service everyday although you do not administer the Sazuke often. This is because we can perform the service whenever we want to do it at any place such as the Main Sanctuary of Church Headquarters, our church, our fellowship, or our home, except for the monthly service. In performing the service, we do not need any company or partner in front of us. Our partner is God the Parent and Oyasama to whom we pray and perform the service.

On the other hand, it seems rather difficult to administer the Sazuke. Whenever we desire to administer the Sazuke, we need a person who is suffering from illness next to us. If there is such a sick person around us at home, school, or office, we could ask the person if we can administer the Sazuke. But in most cases, it seems difficult to find such a person to whom you can administer the Sazuke in our daily life. Even if there is a sick person around us, we cannot round up our courage to ask him to let us administer the Sazuke to him.

I was one of those who had no courage to ask a sick person by saying, “I am a Tenrikyo missionary. Let me administer the Sazuke to you!” For example, when you board an airplane, you sometimes happen to listen to an announcement saying “Attention, please. Is there any medical doctor or nurse on board? We have an emergency case.” What will you do in that case? Will you stand up and go to the flight attendants immediately for the administration of the Sazuke? I have heard such an announcement on board twice before, but I hesitated to do so because of self-centred human thoughts. Then, when I came to know that there was a medical doctor or nurse on board, I found myself feeling relieved in my mind, which made me feel ashamed and I hated myself.

Furthermore, when our colleague at work or friend at school has a fever or

feels bad, do we tend not to administer the Sazuke and, instead, advise him to go to the doctor or give him medicine before we confess that we are a Tenrikyo follower and want to administer the Sazuke to him?

Regarding such a tendency to give the medical treatment priority over the administration of the Sazuke, the former Shinbashira instructs us as in the following:

“Now, I feel that there is a tendency to neglect the administration of the Sazuke, perhaps because the medical care system is considerably advanced. But medicine is not a cure for everything. The progress of medicine is, in fact, giving rise to difficult new issues. It is also clear that medicine by itself will not be able to solve the fundamental problems of life. Nor will it heal the mind. I believe, therefore, that we ought to administer the Sazuke at every opportunity, exerting our full measure of sincerity.”

In addition to our hesitation to administer the Sazuke, it seems that we tend to have doubt about the effectiveness of the Sazuke. We sometimes wonder if our administration of the Sazuke is effective or not, or if God the Parent will surely accept our mind of sincerity or not.

Concerning this matter, the former Shinbashira also encourages us as in the following:

“It seems to me that there are a number of doubts which make people hesitant to spread the teachings. First, there is the worry that, living their ordinary, daily lives as they do, they may not be able to receive God the Parent’s workings. They are uncertain as to whether God the Parent would actually provide blessings for the Sazuke they administer. These feelings of doubt soon lead to the rationalization that they need not administer the Sazuke after all, because someone else will presumably do it instead. I should like to emphasize, however, that there is no need for such worries. I think people would be better off to adopt the positive assumption that unless they do it, it won’t get done. In fact, it is not too late for them to take this attitude starting on this very day. If they are really determined to have someone be saved at all costs, I would

recommend that they go ahead and exert their utmost toward that end. And even if they are laughed at by others who think it is awkward for someone who is an upstanding member of the community to be doing such things, I would still encourage them to go ahead and try their best. Their efforts will be accepted as repayment for the blessing of their own salvation and, in addition, will constitute an activity of the church to which they belong and consequently, God the Parent and Oyasama would never look the other way. I feel sure that these people will be shown the blessings that are appropriate.”

To ask a person suffering from illness to let us administer the Sazuke, we need great courage. At the same time, we need to get rid of our hesitation. More importantly, we should administer the Sazuke to the sick person with the mind of sincerity, by all means wanting him to be saved or to become even a little better. If that happens, God the Parent and Oyasama will surely show us the blessing by accepting our mind of sincerity. All of us Yoboku are Oyasama’s instruments and all we have to do is just serve as Oyasama’s hands and feet.

In a Divine Direction, we are taught:

I have spoken of the Sazuke, the Sazuke. The Sazuke, no one knows how great its value or how precious it is. The Sazuke, the Sazuke. There are some kinds which I have bestowed on a few and others which I have bestowed on many. However, I have bestowed the same truth. They are all the same. There is no light or heavy with the truth of the Sazuke. After you have attended the order of Besseki step by step, finally, I say to you, sah, receive it. No one can know how precious it is. Even with an expensive instrument, if there is no truth in your mind, it is of no use. Understand the Sazuke, the Sazuke, well.

Osashizu, July 7, 1890

As instructed in this divine direction, there is no difference between heavy or light with the truth. God the Parent just says, “Sah, receive it!” There might be a little difference in how to receive it, but we are taught that the truth of the Sazuke God the Parent has bestowed is equally the same. Therefore, there is

no difference in truth between the Sazuke bestowed on a reverend called the master of the Sazuke and the Sazuke bestowed on you. In this regard, if we receive its truth heavily and use it as many times as we can with sincerity, I feel sure that we will be granted a marvelous blessing.

#### My Salvation Work

Now, I would like to talk about my small experience of salvation work. It was about thirteen or fourteen years ago right after the “three years, one thousand days” season leading up to the 110th Anniversary of Oyasama started.

One day, my elder daughter who was three years old at that time got sick and we took her to the hospital where a suspicion of leukemia was diagnosed. My wife and I were so shocked to hear the name of the disease, “leukemia,” because it is a fatal disease. Before then, we had been asked by the head minister of our church to establish a fellowship. However, we had been hesitant to accept his word. This time, however, there was no time to hesitate because our daughter was suffering from a suspected fatal disease right in front of our eyes.

Then, we determined our minds firmly to establish a fellowship and to start missionary work. At the same time, I personally resolved to administer the Sazuke at least once a day and to administer it more than one thousand times by the day of the 110th Anniversary of Oyasama.

From the next day on, we started missionary work to carry out our resolution. We usually went to the Ikoi-no-Ie Hospital in Tenri everyday. We worked hard in close co-operation with each other. First, my wife with our daughter and a little baby sprinkled the fragrance to those who were taking a rest or smoking in front of the main entrance of the hospital. Once she won the confidence of a sick person and successfully administered the Sazuke to him, she usually asked his name and ward number in the hospital. From the next time on, it was I who visited that person, talked to him, and administered the Sazuke to him.

Since I worked for the Overseas Mission Department at that time, I donated my lunch and one-hour lunch-break to God the Parent so that I could visit the hospital to administer the Sazuke everyday. I sometimes administered the Sazuke more than ten times a day. When I was busy at work during the lunch-break, I visited the hospital to administer the Sazuke to those who had

been waiting for me very early in the morning or late at night as well. To those who left the hospital, we used to visit their own homes or other hospitals to administer the Sazuke on Sundays and day-offs.

Most of those whom we met and administered the Sazuke to were suffering from chest diseases such as lung cancers, emphysema, heart diseases and so on. Because these were fatal diseases, I encountered a lot of people who were about to die. Not only did we administer the Sazuke to them with the sincerest mind, but also we did prayer services with Twelve Chapters, did clean-up *binokishin* at the toilets of the worship halls at the Main Sanctuary and sometimes fasted with sincerity just for their sake.

As a result, however, exactly ten people passed away for rebirth in spite of our sincere prayers for them during that period. Whenever I saw off the dead body, I used to visit a mortuary located at the lower ground floor two in the hospital. Every time I regretted the lack of my sincerity and then visited the Foundress' Sanctuary and asked Oyasama in tears: "Oh, Oyasama, why didn't You save that person? Is it because my sincerity was not enough or sufficient to save him?" However, when I calmly reflected upon myself later, I realized that, although the illness of those who had suffered from the fatal disease was not cured, all of them passed away for rebirth with a peaceful face without severe pains and suffering thanks to the administration of the truth of the Sazuke.

This fact made us firmly feel how great the Sazuke was. On top of that, we were convinced that their mind had been replaced through the truth of the Sazuke, and that each of them would be blessed more when they are reborn in their next life.

Among the ten people who passed away for rebirth, there was a gentleman in his mid-thirties. We called him Mr. T. It was in the middle of November in 1994. When I was allowed to enter his room in the hospital for the first time, Mr. T lay on the bed with tubes winding around his body. He was not able to speak nor to eat from his mouth. He was attended by his wife and only daughter of preschool age. I was told that Mr. T had been suffering from terminal lung cancer which metastasised all over his body. He looked just about my age at that time. Therefore, whenever I saw his wife and daughter, I felt pitiful and downhearted with the thought, "If he passed away for rebirth at such an early age leaving his wife and small daughter behind . . ." I started to visit him to

administer the Sazuke everyday, praying only for the blessing of his recovery from the disease.

Then, perhaps God the Parent responded to the mind of sincerity. Mr. T very gradually became better day after day. The tubes winding around his body started to be taken off one by one, which enabled him to eat from his mouth and speak a little bit.

One day in December, when I visited him at his room, he told me that he dreamed of a silver-haired old lady in red clothes who was beckoning him to Her. Upon hearing it, I was lost for words momentarily, but, at the same time, I had the confidence that he would be saved without fail.

That year, I was scheduled to go to the United States around December 10 for the Oyasato Seminar Course Two. Since Mr. T's condition was becoming better and I had the confidence that he would be saved, I left for the States, asking my wife to go to visit him everyday for the administration of the Sazuke while I was away.

On the night when I arrived in New York after traveling around within the States for a few days, however, I received a phone call at the New York Centre where I was staying. It was from my wife. She said to me in a tearful voice, "Mr. T has passed away for rebirth some time ago." I could hardly believe my ears. As I was firmly confident that Mr. T would surely be saved because he had been getting better day after day and because he saw Oyasama in his dream, my shock was too big to sleep well during that night. What came to my mind first was the faces of his wife and daughter. "With what thought should I see them?" "What words could I give them?" I regretted the lack of my sincerity from the bottom of my heart.

At the very end of the year I returned home from the States. A new year started. When I was doing *hinokishin* during the Sechi Festival at Church Headquarters, I had a phone call from Translation Section to ask me to return to the office. Immediately, I went back to the Section, where the wife of Mr. T was sitting. As soon as she saw me, she started to shed tears, and talked to me after a while, "Mr. Adachi. Thank you so much for everything you did for my husband. To my deep regret, my husband departed from this world. In spite of the terminal lung cancer which spread all over his body, he breathed peacefully without any pains at his last moment. Thank you so much. I have come here just to tell you this." By hearing her words, I thought that I had

been rewarded. At the same time, I also thought that, although his cancer was not cured, Mr. T's mind had been replaced by the truth of the Sazuke. Therefore, I was confident that he would receive the marvelous blessings when he would be reborn in his next life. Without saying anything, I rushed to the Foundress' Sanctuary right after I saw her off.

My wife and I continued such missionary work more than three years. Thanks to the blessings of God the Parent and the guidance of Oyasama, I administered the Sazuke more than one thousand and one hundred times by the day of the 110th Anniversary of Oyasama.

On the other hand, God the Parent and Oyasama showed a lot of marvelous blessings to those to whom we had administered the Sazuke during this period and my daughter's leukemia diagnosis was shortly cleared away and she completely recovered from illness within a few months.

Once again, I would like to quote the words of the former Shinbashira as in the following:

“We are Oyasama's instruments and, therefore, we need only serve as Oyasama's hands and feet. We are not the ones who save people. Make no mistake: the saving is done by God the Parent and Oyasama. It is God the Parent and Oyasama who do the saving. We must never forget that we only assist in the work of salvation and that we have only to act in accordance with the intention of God the Parent and Oyasama.”

As obvious in these words of the former Shinbashira, through the above-mentioned small experiences of salvation work, my wife and I realised that all that we Yoboku can do is just administer the Sazuke to those suffering from illness in accordance with the intention of God the Parent and Oyasama, and whether or not they are shown the blessings and saved is in the hands of God the Parent and Oyasama. Keeping this in mind firmly, we should like to obediently implement the administration of the Sazuke with courage.

I think that there is no knack or secret in easily administering the Sazuke in our daily life, but if pressed I would say that you should try to implement the administration of the Sazuke obediently without any human thinking. As mentioned earlier, since we tend to think that we will save a sick person by our own power, which brings about human thinking, then we cannot obediently

administer the Sazuke. I believe that being obedient or having an honest mind is the basis of receiving God's blessings.

Another one might be to form a habit of administering the Sazuke in your everyday life. It seems difficult for young people while they are single, but when you get older and get married, you live together with your wife or husband. Furthermore, when you have a baby, you also live with your baby. When family lives together, someone among them will get sick sooner or later. Especially, a child tends to get sick easily. Sometimes he catches a cold, has a stomach ache all of sudden, or has a high fever. In such a case, what will you do? First, will you give a medicine to him or take him to the doctor, or will you administer the Sazuke to him and then give him the Sacred Rice . . . ?

There are some people who administer the Sazuke only to those who are suffering from a serious illness. There are also some who do not use the Sazuke because they think that it is too precious to use easily. I don't think that such a thought is in accordance with the intention of Oyasama. No matter how slight the illness may be, first of all, you should form a habit of praying to God the Parent and Oyasama and then of administering the Sazuke. Especially for a child, if you make a habit of administering the Sazuke to him whenever he gets sick after his birth, when he gets sick even after he grows up, he would ask you by saying, "Hi mum and dad, please administer the Sazuke to me right now!" If such a habit has been formed, even after he grows up to be a man, gets married and has a baby, he would be a person who willingly administers the Sazuke when his child gets sick.

Closing: Toward the Next Milestone

I have talked about the Sazuke up to this point. What do you think? Do you feel the courage to administer the Sazuke is flowing out now?

As you know, we are now in the season of the second half of the year of the 120th Anniversary of Oyasama. In this season, we, all Yoboku of the path, must take a new step forward heading for the next milestone, that is, the 130th Anniversary of Oyasama. It will be the path of spiritual growth. We will be expected to grow more spiritually than before. One of the steps will be the administration of the Sazuke, which though we have been aware of its importance, we have not been able to implement easily before. We should like to grow spiritually together to the extent that we can administer the Sazuke at

any time, any place, and to anyone.

Don't be afraid! Don't be shy! When you obediently administer the Sazuke with the mind of sincerity, God the Parent and Oyasama will surely give us a helping hand and grant us a marvelous blessing. Believing it firmly, let us walk on the path of spiritual growth together as the instruments for world salvation.

Finally, I would like to complete my speech by quoting one of my favorite passages from the Divine Directions:

In this path, if you always keep the directions of God firmly in your mind, believing in God of Origin, God in Truth and Oyasama, you will never be in sudden despair even when you are in an isolated place. I'm always ahead of you when you go one mile, two miles, three miles, and ten miles. From Heaven, God will surely protect you and bless you wherever.

Osashizu, April 3, 1887

## Section Summary Report

Organizer: Hinao Nagao

Thirty-one attendants participated in lively discussion for 1-1-3 “Sazuke” Section Meeting on the morning of July 15th after listening to a 30-minute speech delivered by Rev. Masafumi Adachi, head of Tenrikyo Oceania Centre.

Rev. Adachi’s speech related his and his wife’s pre-anniversary efforts of sincerity in engaging in salvation work while living in Tenri in the Three Year, One Thousand Day drive towards Oyasama 110th Anniversary. Through this experience, he was convinced that there is always a parental blessing provided every time you administer the Sazuke and that the more you use the Sazuke, the more effective it will become. In the end, he emphasized that if one truly sets his/her mind to administering the Sazuke with a strong sense of urgency, then you can administer the Sazuke far more often than most participants do and that is our best way to bring satisfaction to God the Parent and make the everliving truth of Oyasama shine forth in radiance.

### Discussions on Sazuke Sharing Sazuke Experiences

As his speech set the tone for the subsequent discussion of how to make Sazuke part of our everyday life, the discussion led by moderator Ms. Sharlene Miura started off with a question “What is your best Sazuke experience.” To this, many shared their experiences as receiving party, such as a strong, lasting feeling of assurance coming from a mother by her gentle hand-caressing, and a truly sincere calling of the divine name “Tenri-O-no-Mikoto” that brought tears to one’s eyes. They all felt the warm sincerity flowing into their bodies and minds.

On the other hand, some active Yoboku shared their experiences of Sazuke as doers. One veteran Yoboku truly values and appreciate genuine contact and relationship that are forged through administering the Sazuke everyday on his deaf son for many years. His line of prayer is always for Joyous Life with or without deafness. This Sazuke administration brought so much joyousness into his family. Physical cure is not what true salvation is all about and what we are after.

### Cause for Fear and Hesitation

Then the discussion shifted towards fear and hesitation participants felt in administering the Sazuke in various situations. Interreligious contact was seen as posing a problem for some trying to administer the Sazuke. To this fear or hesitation, another participant shared her experience of listening to a Buddhist priestess for many hours and finally being allowed to administer the Sazuke. Extraordinary patience and genuine concern displayed for the other person's welfare are the key in winning trust and a firm connection. Another comment was made that the Sazuke's effect is more than physical, it moves the mind and touches the soul of the recipient, regardless of religious affiliation, so long as you are truly sincere.

Another cause for hesitation is our human thinking dictated by apprehension such as what if my Sazuke doesn't work, what would people think of me, and will they not be offended? In certain socio-cultural settings, such worries seem real and well-founded. However, a good point from a perspective of faith was raised from the floor to counter this apprehension that when God sees the need and put you there to reach out and help someone in need, all we need to concentrate on is to approach that person with utmost sincerity and do the Sazuke. A strong conviction that it is God who commissions you to do it right there and then and a greedless approach that does not ask for something in return or expects a certain result are the key spiritual qualities called for in such a situation.

Some people might be afraid to share a teaching or two before administering the Sazuke. To this, a regular Sazuke user said, "I only share the basic teaching with a non-Tenrikyo person that the Joyous Life is the message in the present ordeal or that we borrow our bodies from God," and cautioned us against hinting at the recipient's fault or wrongdoing. In many ways, a reverend who is truly concerned with the recipient of the Sazuke is first out to establish a firm, loving connection with him or her and consequently win trust while administering the Sazuke. He has outstanding patience to wait until the recipient voluntarily makes progress and seeks divine intent; in the meantime the Yoboku upholds the determination to connect with him or her and displays sincerity for the longest time.

### Proactive Thinking for the Sazuke

Such courageous and proactive thinking sets the tone for the rest of the one-hour and half discussion. Another participant shared his case of administering the Sazuke on his co-worker, something a lot of Yoboku are hesitant to do due to overwhelming social and legal stigma, versed or not versed, against bringing one's religious aspect into the work environment. It took him a lot of courage to administer the Sazuke at workplace, but he realized that a lot of fears associated with using the Sazuke in public is imagined than real.

To this, a hospital worker shared her way of sincerely praying for her aged patient in a non-verbal manner on a regular basis while taking care of the patient, her way of displaying sincerity might be subtle but she feels comfortable doing so in her medical environment where the rule against religious expression at work is generally more strict and clearly stated.

### Taking Advantage of One's Occupation and Work Environment

The discussion picked up in heat toward the end when a Brazilian participant commented on how Rev. Kimura at Jussara Church takes advantages of his work as a massager to administer the Sazuke on his customers and how he asks them to bring not money for appreciation but food offerings to God which will in turn be given to the needy later as a great way to reach out and help people. People who are self-employed have more leverage to do such things. To broaden the horizon for our discussion, a lady from the floor shared her knowledge of the Kenyan mission. In Kenya, the Tenrikyo mission is flourishing with a medical clinic, a technical training center and a prayer hall where 200 or more people line up in throngs asking for the Sazuke.

### Suggestions for the Future

Suggestion was made for promoting ways to reach out to people who need our prayer such as putting on an ad for a public Sazuke session in a major newspaper or on a Tenrikyo "MySpace page." Also holding regular Sazuke sessions after the monthly service at *Dendocho* (mission headquarters), local churches and elsewhere during our church functions was mentioned as a immediate action that can and should be implemented.

Wrap-up Remarks

We had shared many valuable experiences, ideas and suggestions concerning the Sazuke. The Section Meeting was successful because we covered a wide range of discussions from the meaning of the Sazuke, to ways to implement this precious means for salvation work, and to ways to heighten our awareness as Sazuke doers. And all participants strongly felt personal needs to display their own sincerity in action—through the Sazuke—and the desire to summon up the courage to do the Sazuke more often, while being well-aware that their test begins right when they return to their accustomed ways of living back home.

## A Brief Introduction to the Truth of Origin

Masaharu Matsuda

(Mr. Matsuda is a staff member of Tenrikyo Church Headquarters and works at the Overseas Department, Translation Section)

### 1. The Truth of Origin as the Story of Creation

#### A. The Significance of the Truth of Origin

In *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, “The Truth of Origin” appears as the heading of Chapter Three, and many Tenrikyo followers usually use the term to refer to the “story of creation,” which constitutes much of that chapter. In this session, I would like to follow the same manner and use the term “the Truth of Origin” to refer to the story of creation.

We all know the reason why God the Parent created human beings, in terms of God’s true intention behind human creation. In the Ofudesaki, we are taught:

The reason Tsukihi began human beings  
was the desire to see you lead a Joyous Life.

Ofudesaki XIV:25

God the Parent created human beings to see their Joyous Life and share in that joy. God’s intention to create human beings also appears in *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo* as well as in the Besseki pledge. The Joyous Life is the ultimate goal of human existence.

Chapter Three of *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, “The Truth of Origin,” starts as follows:

In order to hasten the realization of the Joyous Life, God the Parent revealed the truth of the creation so that we might understand the truth of the Joyous Service and the mysterious causality by which God appeared on earth through Oyasama as the Shrine.

*The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, p. 20

Then, this passage is followed by the story of creation. Also, in *Lectures on*

*the Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, the second Shinbashira said:

This story, however, is not given as a description of the actual way things were at the time, but as a means of helping people understand the truth of the Salvation Service and the reason why Oyasama became the Shrine of Tsukihi.

*The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, p. 39

Also:

Nevertheless, I should like you to bear in mind firmly that this story was told in order to have us understand the truth of the Salvation Service rather than have us learn the precise details of the story itself.

*The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, p. 40

Rev. Tadamasa Fukaya said in *A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*:

The divine intention in elucidating the truth about the origin is to emphasize the significance of performing the Kagura Service.

*A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*, p. 2

The Truth of Origin not only tells you a story of human creation but also allows you to understand the truth of the Service and the causality by which God became openly revealed through Oyasama. The Service and the Truth of Origin are closely connected. The same thing can be said about the role of Oyasama and the Truth of Origin.

#### B. The Service and Oyasama as the Shrine of God

With regard to the Service, in *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, we find the following verse:

I shall do marvelous things,  
the same as My beginning of this world.

I shall begin a Service which has never existed since I began  
this world, and assuredly settle the world.

Ofudesaki VI:7-8

The Service was taught by God the Parent with the intent to manifest once more the marvelous workings by which humankind and the world were created where there was no form, this time in the cause of the single-hearted salvation of humankind. Through the Service, the world will be reconstructed as the world of joyousness, which is the intent of God.

*The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, pp. 12-13

Moreover:

This Service, which God also called the “Kagura Service,” is a reenactment in principle of God the Parent’s workings during creation . . . Indeed, the Kagura Service is the means by which we return to the origin of human creation, restore its joy in the present, and invoke divine providence by uniting our minds in praise of the boundless grace of God the Parent.

*The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, p. 14

We are blessed with salvation by the performance of the Service, which we are taught is the manifestation of God’s marvelous workings by which human beings were created. The Service is also the means to return to the origin of human creation.

Chapter Five of *The Life of Oyasama*, which is entitled “The Salvation Service,” starts as follows:

In accord with the will of God the Parent to have all human beings lead the Joyous Life, Oyasama taught the Salvation Service from 1866 to 1882 as the path to universal salvation. During this period, She expounded the Truth of Origin and arranged every detail of the Salvation Service, according to the stages of the children’s spiritual growth.

*The Life of Oyasama*, p. 55

As we all know, Oyasama not only taught the Service but also expounded the Truth of Origin to have people understand the truth of the Service. Here is the timetable regarding the Service and the story of creation:

- 1865 (Keio 1) The construction of the Place for the Service was accomplished.
- 1866 (Keio 2) The melody and the hand movements of *Ashiki harai, tasuke-tamae, Tenri-O-no-Mikoto* were taught.
- 1867 (Keio 3) The Twelve Songs were composed. For the next three full years, the melodies and the dance movements to the songs were taught.
- 1870 (Meiji 3) The Eight Verses of the Yorozuyo were added to the beginning of the Twelve Songs. The song and the hand movements of “*Choto hanashi*” were taught.
- 1873 (Meiji 6) Oyasama ordered Izo Iburi to make a wooden model of the Kanrodai.
- 1874 (Meiji 7) Chapter III to VI of the Ofudesaki, in which the essence of the story of creation appears, were written. Oyasama went to the Maegawa’s house to receive the *kagura* masks.
- 1875 (Meiji 8) The song and the hand movements of “*Ichiretsu sumasu Kanrodai*” were taught. Eleven different Services (Fertilizer, Germination, etc.) were taught. The Jiba was identified.
- 1876 (Meiji 9) Oyasama taught the three stringed instruments for the Service.
- 1880 (Meiji 13) The Service was performed with the inclusion of the musical instruments for the first time.
- 1881 (Meiji 14) Oyasama told Her followers to “compile a divine record.” The construction of the stone Kanrodai began.
- 1882 (Meiji 15) After the removal and confiscation of the completed sections of the stone Kanrodai, Oyasama altered the phrase “*Ichiretsu sumasu*” to “*Ichiretsu sumashite*.” The wording “*Ashiki harai*” was altered to “*Ashiki o harote*.”

By reading the story of creation, we are able to know God's workings during human creation as well as the providence of each instrument and where each one of them stands for the Service as well as the very place of conception, which is the Jiba. Also, we are able to know that Oyasama is the Shrine of God. We are taught that Oyasama has the soul of *Izanami-no-Mikoto*, the mother in creation. She was returned to the Residence of Origin when the years equal to the number of the first-born had elapsed. That was the day of origin of the teaching, which is October 26, 1838, when Oyasama was settled as the Shrine of God. You will be able to know the Causality of the Soul of Oyasama, the Causality of the Residence, and the Causality of the Promised Time as well.

The Service is a reenactment in principle of God the Parent's workings during creation, and the Truth of Origin unveils the truth of the Service.

## 2. The Content of the Story of Creation

### A. The Truth of Origin in the Ofudesaki

The Truth of Origin in the doctrine is based on the relevant verses of the Ofudesaki as well as the written documents compiled by early followers and preserved as the Ancient Records of the Muddy Waters.

The story of creation in Chapter Three of *The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, "The Truth of Origin," was not written by Oyasama. The second Shinbashira said:

As for the story known as the Ancient Records of the Muddy Waters, much of what we have in Chapter 3 is summarized in the Ofudesaki's Part VI. In writing our outline of the story, therefore, we based ourselves on the relevant verses of the Ofudesaki. In addition, we drew on the many other versions of the story of the creation of the world preserved as the Ancient Records of the Muddy Waters.

*Lectures on the Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, p. 41

Again, the Truth of Origin was written when the *Doctrine* was compiled, and the core of the content was based on the Ofudesaki, mainly Part VI, and the other supplementary materials such as various versions of the story of the creation of the world preserved as the Ancient Records of the Muddy Waters.

The verses of the Ofudesaki that tell the story of creation are as follows: III:15-18; IV:120-127; VI:29-54, 80-87; XI:69-71; XII:142-145; XIV:23-26; XVI:12-13; and XVII:6-7 (according to Shigeru Serizawa's *Ofudesaki Tsuyaku*).

I can say that the Truth of Origin is authentic because much of the content is found in the Ofudesaki, and those ancient records were directly taught through the mouth of Oyasama.

#### B. About the Ancient Records of the Muddy Waters

First of all, I have to admit that there is no such written document entitled the "Ancient Record of the Muddy Waters." Around 1881, Oyasama urged Her followers to "compile a divine record," and they wrote a story based on what Oyasama had taught. In *The Life of Oyasama, Foundress of Tenrikyo*, we find:

For some time, Oyasama had been urging the followers, saying:

Compile a divine record.

Presumably, Oyasama was telling them to record the main points of the story She had been teaching. "Notes on the Story of the Creation of this World," compiled in 1881 and written by Ryojiro Yamazawa, was one of these.

*The Life of Oyasama*, p. 117

Oyasama supposedly finished writing the Ofudesaki in 1882, and around that time She started to focus on teaching the story of creation and also started to tell Her followers to compile a divine record. It is the story that is today referred to as the "Story of the Divine Record." Oyasama is reported to have taught it over and over late at night during the busy farming seasons, and She also sought to have Her followers fix that story in their minds, exactly as it was, and commit it to memory. Oyasama told Her disciples to compile a divine record, and although Oyasama told them to submit what they had written, none of them met with Her approval.

There are many versions (over 65 versions according to *Tenrikyo Jiten*) of the Story of the Divine Record compiled between 1881 (Meiji 14) and 1887 (Meiji 20), when Oyasama withdrew from physical life. None of them had such a title called the "Ancient Record of the Muddy Waters" on it. It is not clear when

people started to call those documents such name.

There are two styles found in those documents: one is verse (Japanese *waka* style), and the other is prose (narrative style), and the one entitled “Notes on the Story of the Creation of this World,” compiled in 1881 and written by Ryojiro Yamazawa, is written in verse. Also, there are mainly seven different versions: 1881 (Meiji 14) version, 1882 (Meiji 15) version, 1883 (Meiji 16) version, 1884 (Meiji 17) version, 1885 (Meiji 18) version, 1886 (Meiji 19) version, and 1887 (Meiji 20) version. Among those, 1881 (Meiji 14) and 1883 (Meiji 16) versions are mostly commonly quoted. The ones belonging to the prose style come from various parts of the period concerned. The verse style manuscripts so far discovered are all almost identical except for the titles, and their contents can be dated 1881.

I believe that Oyasama told Her followers to compile a divine record to train them to work as “intermediaries” and convey to others the teachings of God the Parent on behalf of Oyasama. Consequently, the content of the Story of the Divine Record was incorporated into the Besseki lecture. In *A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*, we read:

It was taught, rather, as the story of truth that constitutes the divine way to the single-hearted salvation of mankind.

*A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*, p. 9

Also:

Studying the history of the Tenrikyo mission between 1877 and 1887, we notice that those who conveyed the truth of origin in their missionary work were blessed with many marvelous workings of God.

*A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*, p. 17

We can find a very interesting episode by Naokichi Takai, one of the earliest followers of Oyasama, in *Oyasama Yori Kikishi Hanashi*.

Those who listened to my talk on the story of creation said many things about it, claiming that it was really hard to understand.

“Were there Iga, Kawachi, or Yamato in the muddy ocean?”

“The first children were born half an inch. Was there a measure or a scale in the muddy ocean at that time?”

*Oyasama Yori Kikishi Hanashi*, p. 18

I do not think people at that time fully understood the story of creation. Nevertheless, the content of the Story of the Divine Record was also used for the Besseki lectures and missionary work.

C) The Truth of Origin as a Metaphor

In the Ofudesaki, we are taught:

Now that I shall work salvation unknown until now,  
it is necessary to make the origin known.

Ofudesaki IX:29

All that Tsukihi desires is to have the whole world know  
the origin of human beings.

Ofudesaki X:50

If this truth becomes quickly known to all humankind,  
My talks will be understood.

Ofudesaki X:51

No matter how I strive to explain My teachings,  
unless I teach you the origin. . .

Ofudesaki X:52

God the Parent says it is necessary to make the origin of human beings known for God to work salvation. The Truth of Origin is not a historical fact, but rather, it is the teaching to reconstruct the present world and explore the future, in terms of having our own understanding and applying it to our lives. In *The Life of Oyasama*, we read:

I wish to teach the world of things not to be found in learning, ancient things extending over nine hundred million and ninety-six thousand years.

*The Life of Oyasama*, p. 88

This was told by Oyasama in 1874, when five priests from the Isonokami Shrine came to the Residence. Shortly before this, Oyasama explained to them the providences of God the Parent in detail. Oyasama taught that the Truth of Origin was not found in learning, and I believe that the Truth of Origin is still not to be found in learning even in the present. Rather, we should take the Truth of Origin as a metaphor for the providence of God the Parent for human creation. As you can see in the Truth of Origin, there are many metaphorical expressions. I believe Oyasama used those expressions in order for people at that time to understand easily and to be familiar with the origin. The Second Shinbashira said in the *Lectures*:

These creatures were mentioned only in the hope that their particular shapes and forms might make it easier for us to understand God's providence, or God's workings, during creation . . . With this understanding in mind, I believe that evaluating this story based on a literal interpretation is to miss the point completely.

p. 46

In regard to the direction from which the instruments were drawn forth, I believe that these, too, were taught in order to facilitate our understanding of the Kagura Service.

p. 46

Also, in *Tenrikyo Kyoten Koza* by Hideo Nakajima and Kunio Yamamoto, it is written:

The Truth of Origin is not merely the explanation of a historical fact. . . . It contains many metaphors and symbolic expressions.

p. 75

In *Ofudesaki Chushaku*, we find:

In this story, the intention of God the Parent behind human creation is expressed in rather poetic style . . . We have to awaken to the truth of origin of human creation and parental love of single-hearted salvation.

p. 148

Since the Truth of Origin is rather metaphorical, or poetic, we are allowed to have, and in fact there are, many interpretations for it. Please allow me to give you the example of a metaphor. We all know these four verses of the Ofudesaki:

Hereafter, I shall speak in the metaphor of a path,  
not indicating any place in particular.

Over steep mountains, through tangles of thorns, along narrow  
ledges, and through brandished swords, if you come,

Yet ahead through a sea of flame and a deep abyss,  
you will arrive at a narrow path.

After following the narrow path step by step, you will  
come to a broad path. This is the trustworthy main path.

Ofudesaki I:46-49

Regarding these verses, the *Doctrine* says, “Oyasama personally led the way, demonstrating the Divine Model of the Joyous Life.” We are taught in these verses that Oyasama Herself endured every hardship and laid the path of the Divine Model.

However, these verses are not only about the Divine Model of Oyasama but also our way of life. The *Doctrine* also says:

Oyasama compares the path of single-heartedness with God to a journey over steep mountains and through tangles of thorns, showing that no matter how difficult this path may be for a time, if we but travel it

relying single-heartedly on God the Parent, the path will gradually open into a narrow path and finally widen into a broad path full of promise. Thus, She encourages us, giving us hope and inspiration.

*The Doctrine of Tenrikyo*, p. 7

The same thing can be said about the Truth of Origin. Its content is the story of creation that helps us understand the truth of the Service, but it also makes clear the meaning of human life. The Second Shinbashira said in his *Hi, Mizu, Kaze* (Also in *Lectures*):

Nine-tenths of the teachings have been given to us previously. The teaching of the Truth of Origin, left out in the past, was expounded as the final teaching. With it we are taught clearly the significance of human life.

pp. 95-96

Rev. Tadamasa Fukaya said in his *A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*:

We should regard this as a story of the present time so that it symbolizes the stages of human maturity, whereby ordinary human beings receive the divine blessing and can lead the Joyous Life . . . Then, the thesis that the Truth of Origin is merely a myth of ancient times will become invalid, and its true meaning will penetrate our minds with the power of reality. Accordingly, it will become our mental sustenance as the symbolic narrative of our progress toward spiritual maturity. This story then embraces the roots of all phenomena in which solutions to the problems facing us can be sought.

*A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*, p. 11

We find the Truth of Origin in the Ofudesaki. We find the Truth of Origin in the *Doctrine*. We can listen to the Truth of Origin in the Besseki lecture, but there are not many occasions that the Truth of Origin is taught, studied, or explained in our missionary activities or even in our lives of faith. Before I conclude my presentation, we proposed that each one of us should have our own understanding of the Truth of Origin and apply it to our lives of faith.

The study of the Truth of Origin is an on-going process. In the Ofudesaki, we are taught:

I shall let you dig up the root of this world's origin.  
If you have the strength, do your best to dig it up.

Ofudesaki V:85

I believe that the more we inquire into the Truth of Origin, the more we can relate them to our lives. We should awaken to the Truth of Origin and find the significance of life in it. That is, I believe, what digging up the root of this world's origin means.

The most difficult thing about understanding the Truth of Origin is how strictly or loosely we can interpret it. We often say that it is really hard to understand the Truth of Origin, but as a matter of fact, Oyasama revealed it in order for human beings to understand easily the truth of the Service and the role of Oyasama as well as the significance of life. The interpretation of the Truth of Origin depends on where we are, in terms of our spiritual maturity. What is important is, in the first place, take action and strive to have our own understanding of the Truth of Origin.

The Truth of Origin is now. The muddy ocean is now. Now, let us seekers of the path pledge together to devote ourselves to digging up the root of this world's origin.

## The Truth of Origin as Metaphor: To Understand and Implement It

Motonao Yasui

(Mr. Yasui currently works at the Tenrikyo Overseas Department, Translation Section)

Good morning, everyone. First of all, I'd like to thank everyone for attending the section meeting. I am quite surprised to see so many participants select this section meeting. Perhaps, it just shows that many people are interested in the Truth of Origin. This is a good trend for Tenrikyo. It is partly because the Truth of Origin is the essence of Tenrikyo's teachings. As Shinbashira indicates in Instruction Two, "saving people through teaching the origin is the essence of salvation on this path." If more and more people are saved in this way, the path of single-hearted salvation will advance. In the book *A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*, Tadamasu Fukaya writes:

Looking back upon Tenrikyo history, I have a feeling that Tenrikyo became sluggish when teaching the Truth of Origin was forbidden, while Tenrikyo witnessed a rapid expansion when it was permitted and studied diligently. It is not too much to say then that the degree of the spread and comprehension of the Truth of Origin will determine the fortunes of Tenrikyo, and is, thereby, closely connected with world peace.<sup>11</sup>

On the other hand, the fact that many people are interested in the Truth of Origin may be indicating their difficulty in understanding and implementing it, despite the great emphasis put on the Truth of Origin. One way that we can understand and implement the Truth of Origin is to see it as metaphor. A good metaphor implies a model. When we see our experiences based on the Truth of Origin, our reflection—which necessarily involves language—is metaphorical. That is, from our experiences, we are led to the Truth of Origin. Based on a model suggested by a good metaphor, people can go on to make a hypothesis about the reality which the original metaphor refers to. A metaphor

<sup>11</sup> Fukaya, Tadamasu, *A Doctrinal Study: The Truth of Origin*, Tenri, Japan: Tenrikyo Overseas Mission Department, 1983, pp. 19-20.

thereby allows them to elaborate on the model. Similarly, once the connection between our experiences and the Truth of Origin is made, we can go on to apply the Truth of Origin to our lives—in the sense that we can determine the course of our action based on the Truth of Origin.

The outline of my speech is therefore as follows: First, I will briefly explain the definition and function of metaphor. Then, I would like to explore how we can understand the Truth of Origin as metaphor and what it entails, using Tadamasu Fukaya as our guide.

What is Metaphor?

What is metaphor? It may well take up the entire speech to answer this question, for, as Janet Martin Soskice indicates, “a definition of metaphor useful to one discipline often proves unsatisfactory to another.”<sup>12</sup> Since my speech is not on metaphor *per se*, I would like to adopt Soskice’s simple yet encompassing definition of metaphor. She writes:

*Metaphor is that figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another. . . . ‘Speaking is intended to mark that metaphor is a phenomenon of language use (and not that it is oral). Similarly, ‘thing’ signifies any object or state of affairs, and not necessarily a physical object . . . Finally, ‘seen to be suggestive’ means seen so by a competent speaker of the language<sup>13</sup>.*

To define metaphor as figure of speech is meant to distinguish it from “model.” Both “metaphor” and “model” are often used synonymously in theological writings. Model can be an object or state of affairs while metaphor cannot. For instance, a globe itself is a model of the earth but it is not a metaphor of the earth. When we call God our Parent, “parent” is a model for God. If we go on to say that God loves and cares for us based on that model, our speech is then metaphorical. As Soskice says,

Talk based on models will be metaphorical, so model and metaphor, though different categories and not to be . . . equated, are closely linked; the latter is what we have when we speak on the basis of the former.<sup>14</sup>

12 Soskice, Janet Martin, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, p. 15.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid. p. 55.

In other words, a good metaphor implies a model or models based on which some reality is figuratively spoken about. If a metaphor allows us to go back to the original model or models, we can speak metaphorically about the same reality by elaborating on the same model or models.

For example, when we say that we are on the “path” to the Joyous Life, we may recall a physical path that leads to a certain place. This in turn suggests that our endeavor toward the Joyous Life is like a journey on that path. By elaborating on the model suggested by a metaphor, we are able to ponder over it and speak more about that reality.

### Understanding the Truth of Origin

As I mentioned earlier, we think that the Truth of Origin is important but we have a hard time understanding it. When it comes to its implementation, we can hardly imagine how it can be done. Tadamasu Fukaya, well known for his theological studies on the Truth of Origin as well as for his extraordinary missionary activities, provides us with a good example as to how we can understand and implement the Truth of Origin.

In interpreting the Truth of Origin, Fukaya talks about what he calls “contemporary understanding” of the Truth of Origin or interpretation from the present-day perspective. I find this to be very intriguing because he deals with the Truth of Origin in a way that we can relate to in our daily lives. If we only take the Truth of Origin as the story of creation, which took place some 900 million years ago, we would have difficult time seeing its relevance to our lives. No doubt the Truth of Origin tells us something about our origin—that God created us human beings to see our Joyous Life. Yet, we ought to see some relevance to our lives if we are to implement it.

Tadamasu Fukaya, after long years of study and missionary activities, concludes that the Truth of Origin is the story of salvation. On the surface, the Truth of Origin is about God’s creation of humankind and the world where there was no form. On what basis, then, can he make such a leap from creation to salvation?

One could answer this by saying that, with the same providence through which God created humankind and the world, God is working for salvation of all people throughout the world. This is symbolized in the Kagura Service. In the Service, each Service performer symbolizes a respective aspect of

God's providence in human creation. By reenacting the providence, we pray for salvation—that is, the realization of the Joyous Life. Thus, creation and salvation can be considered as one in the truth. On this basis, therefore, the Truth of Origin which tells us the story of creation can be understood as the story of salvation.

For Fukaya, however, the link between creation and salvation came not only through theological contemplations. It was also through his missionary experiences that he realized that the Truth of Origin was indeed the story of salvation. As he writes:

You cannot comprehend the doctrine of Tenrikyo just by reading or hearing it. Only by practicing what you learn from the teaching, are you able to acquire for the first time a true understanding of it. Conversely, illusory arguments over the teachings without connection to practice or experiences are not necessary for one's religious life.<sup>15</sup>

When he engaged in salvation work, the Truth of Origin served as a frame by which he understood what he was going through. For instance, Fukaya remembers the days when he engaged in solitary missionary work in Tokyo. At first, he had to spend several nights at “an unsheltered place” under a bridge. He likens these days to the life of an insect which went through “eight thousand and eight” rebirths. Eventually, he was blessed with a small room to live in, which he related to as being a place of a beast. He writes:

Imagining the lives of birds and beasts, I actually felt the creation story in which human beings had experienced 8,008 rebirths, going through all forms of living things. Perhaps others also go through all these hardships before becoming full-fledged Yoboku.<sup>16</sup>

In salvation work, we come to see God's workings, for God is the One Who is actually saving and we are merely being God's instruments. Such experiences point to a model, just as a good metaphor does. In other words, by participating in God's work of saving others, we will be witnessing God's workings. These workings that we witness differ from the kind of working we

---

<sup>15</sup> Fukaya, *The Truth of Origin*, p. 65.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 68.

experience in our everyday life. They are the workings that become apparent in salvation work. If the Truth of Origin contains a story of salvation, then we naturally come to think that our experiences of God's saving acts are modeled in the Truth of Origin. It is like when one finally gets the right focus after going back and forth with a camera. As things that appeared blurred suddenly become clear through the lenses, our experiences will make sense when it accords with the Truth of Origin. Our frame of mind shifts from our own selves to God. That is, we come to be single-hearted with God and truly become an instrument of God in salvation work.

### Implementing the Truth of Origin

Once this paradigm shift occurs, we can then go on to elaborate on the model—i.e., the Truth of Origin. This extension is a characteristic of a good metaphor. A model provided by a good metaphor allows people to make assumptions based on it. The model, or the Truth of Origin, suggests what should be done next and what shouldn't. In this sense, the Truth of Origin serves as our guiding principle in our salvation work.

For instance, when Fukaya was serving as Bishop of the Mission Headquarters in America, he went on a missionary tour to Washington D.C. At the airport, he was joined by a missionary and decided with him to do missionary work there. According to Fukaya, they decided to sprinkle the fragrance of the teachings and engage in salvation work for three days and three nights there based on the story recounted in the Truth of Origin, where God put seeds of humanity in three days and three nights. As a result of this effort, a Tenrikyo church was eventually established there.<sup>17</sup>

Fukaya thus determines his course of action by applying the Truth of Origin to his circumstance. By doing what is suggested by the Truth of Origin, he comes to see the fruit of his activities. This reinforces his confidence in the Truth of Origin and deepens his understanding of God's workings in salvation work. That is, the more he engaged in salvation work based on the Truth of Origin, the better and deeper he understood the significance of the Truth of Origin. It goes without saying that his long years of missionary activities enabled him to relate to the Truth of Origin and apply it to his salvation work. The most important point here is that this was made possible because he

<sup>17</sup> Fukaya, Tadamasa, "Nioigake, Otasuke," in *Michi-no-Tomo*, October, 1979, Tenri, Japan: Doyusha, p. 4.

engaged in salvation work and recognized God's workings in it.

#### Infallibility of the Truth of Origin

Before concluding my speech, I would like to discuss the nature of the link between the Truth of Origin and our experiences as well as their interpretations. Specifically, the question I am raising here is this: Can we claim that the connection we make between our missionary experiences and the Truth of Origin is correct? The answer is yes and no. It is yes because our successful deductions from the Truth of Origin validate such a connection. It is no, however, in the sense that the connection remains uncertain because our reflection on our experience of God's workings is subject to change as we accumulate more and more experiences.

It is like accumulating evidence for a certain scientific theory. The more evidence you have for the theory, the more certain you can be about the theory that it is describing the reality. But if scientists gather enough evidence that does not match with the predictions made based on the theory, they may modify the theory to accommodate the abnormalities. They refine the theory, so to speak. The biggest difference, however, is that the Truth of Origin will remain unaffected whereas scientific theory is subject to change. It is because scientists put more value on experimental data or evidence. When people find their application of the Truth of Origin not working, they do not go on to change the Truth of Origin. Rather, they make modification on the way they apply the Truth of Origin.

The infallibility of the Truth of Origin, which I simply assume as a matter of faith, is not necessarily negative but can be positive because when our application works, we know for sure that we are on the right track. On the other hand, when it is not working, we can come to think that there may be a better way of applying it and correct our way of thinking. In this way, we become clover to the intention of God and make spiritual growth accordingly.

#### Conclusion

In summary, when we engage in salvation work, we come to understand God's workings in the light of the Truth of Origin in a way that we can relate to our lives. From there, we can go on to implement the Truth of Origin by applying it to our salvation work. If it works, we can understand the Truth

of Origin more fully. When it does not work, we can reflect upon our way of thinking in terms of the Truth of Origin. In either case, as long as we keep on trying, we will be adjusting ourselves so as to accord with God's intention. The key to understand and implement the Truth of Origin is salvation work.

## Section Summary Report

Organizer: Masaharu Matsuda

The goal of this section was to study what the Truth of Origin is and share insights on the Truth of Origin in order for it to serve in its own capacity as a fundamental resource.

This section was divided into four parts: a presentation by Masa Matsuda, a video showing the interviews by those who live in a manner based on the Truth of Origin (head minister Colin Saito of Honolulu Church and Honbu-jun'in Kiyozo Yamada), a lecture by Motonao Yasui, and a discussion session. The video served as a helping material for the participants to learn how they should awaken to the Truth of Origin and find the significance of life in it. Also, in the discussion session, many participants shared with others their opinions about comprehending the Truth of Origin. Here are some points brought up in the discussion session:

The Truth of Origin directly connects with the Service; we dance, sing, and play instruments to the Songs for the Service in unison. By doing so the Joyous Life will be achieved. What I think is that the joyous harmony, found in both the Truth of Origin and the perfection of the Service, is of prime importance in our lives.

The story of creation is very unique and different from the Genesis, and whenever I tell this story to others who believe in other religions, they are quite impressed with that. The reason is that the Truth of Origin teaches the complete providence of God the Parent in detail although it is difficult for them to pronounce the name of each aspect of it. This is what I emphasize when I convey the teachings to others.

I often engage in door-to-door mission. When I encounter new people, I always tell them about the Truth of Origin. They seem to be astonished by that. I don't mean that they understand the story. Many people see a parallel between the Truth of Origin and their lives.

I believe the Truth of Origin is very intriguing, especially when I have a conversation about it with others and exchange ideas with them. However, I have a general question to everybody here: how strictly or loosely can this story

of creation be interpreted? How should we interpret this story, especially the numbers (the number of the first-born children, the gradual growth of the height of human beings, etc.). In my opinion, this story was originally the way to explain the broad idea of human creation and growth to those who were not scientifically inclined.

The Truth of Origin is symbolic, not literal. When we explain something to children, like when we talk to them about conception, we do not do it literally. Instead, we try to use figures such as tadpoles searching for something, for example. The story of creation is just like a kid's story. We see many creatures in those kinds of stories, such as fish and imaginary animals like dragons. Oyasama used symbolic figures to make us understand the origin of human beings easily, and I think it is more fascinating that way.

We cannot really force others to understand the Truth of Origin. I believe the comprehension of it depends on our spiritual growth. Since the Truth of Origin is very detailed and metaphorical, I think it is fine to say, "O.K., I understand this part, but I don't understand that part."

When I relate the Truth of Origin to the basic teachings of Tenrikyo, I think of "two in one." Everything has two contradictory concepts, such as positive and negative, etc. "Two in one," in terms of using two opposing factors of the complete providence, really helps when we do salvation work.

At the end of the discussion session, it was proposed that Tenrikyo followers should make efforts of understanding of the Truth of Origin and apply it to their lives. Since there were over fifty participants for this section, it was difficult to bring satisfaction to everybody. In fact, some participants, rather than learning how to have their own understanding, claimed that they were more interested in asking questions about some specific points and learn more about them, such as numbers and directions.

Nonetheless, according to the discussions, it seems that the basic points of the Truth of Origin have been widely used for imparting the teachings in English-speaking countries. Also, many people agree that the study of the Truth of Origin must be a continuous process. The Truth of Origin is the final teaching and what makes Tenrikyo, Tenrikyo.

## A Universally Relevant Model Here and Now

Motohiro Fukaya

(Rev. Motohiro Fukaya is a staff member of Tenrikyo Kawaramachi Grand Church and resides in Kyoto, Japan)

The following is a worksheet provided by the speaker to promote discussion during the session.

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word “*Hinagata*, the Divine Model”? Pick one example of the Divine Model that you are familiar with, and explain its message or meaning.

2. Compare Oyasama’s life with yours. What similarities/differences can you find in your reactions/attitudes towards the events in life.

3. Put yourself in place of Zenbei, Oyasama’s husband, at the First Revelation of God the Parent in 1838. Or, in place of Shinnosuke, the First Shinbashira at January 26, 1887. What would you do? Why?

4. What do you think is the “main theme” of the Divine Model of Oyasama? What is the most important aspect of the Divine Model for you?

5. How can we better apply the Divine Model to our life/faith?

## Section Summary Report

Organizer: Motohiro Fukaya

Procedure: Form six groups of six people, placing the chairs in circles. Moderator provides a worksheet for every participant containing five questions/themes to serve as bases for the group discussion. Participants answer each question and then discuss among themselves over the question. About fifteen minutes are allowed for each question/discussion. After all the questions are answered and discussed, a representative from each group presents his/her comments, impressions or summary of the group discussion.

Five questions on the worksheet (. . . and moderators original intention):

1. “What comes to your mind when you hear the word ‘*Hinagata*, the Divine Model?’ Pick one example of the Divine Model that you are familiar with, and explain its message of meaning.” (. . . intended to warm up the participants and focus their thoughts on the general topic of Oyasama’s Divine Model)

2. “Compare Oyasama’s life with yours. What similarities/differences can you find in your reactions/attitudes towards the events in life?” (. . . to make close and personal connection with the Divine Model)

3. “Put yourself in place of Zenbei, Oyasama’s husband, at the First Revelation of God the Parent in 1838. Or, in place of Shinnosuke, the First Shinbashira at January 26, 1887. What would you do? Why? (. . . attempt to take an expanded concept of the Divine Model to include the actions, not only of Oyasama Herself, but of people around Her such as Zenbei, Kokan, Shinnosuke, etc., to view them as our models too)

4. “What do you think is the ‘main theme’ of the Divine Model of Oyasama? What is the most important aspect of the Divine Model for you?” (. . . attempt to view the Divine Model as a whole and feel one principal message through it)

5. How can we better apply the Divine Model to our life/faith? (. . . to guide the participants to go through the rest of Forum having some idea about the Divine Model in their mind)

Summary of comments by the group representatives:

- The session was worthwhile.
- Each question was difficult to answer.
- It's difficult to put the Divine Model into practice but it is necessary to repeatedly try to put the example of salvation work shown by Oyasama.
- The session was too scholastic for some of the participants.
- Cannot see any similarities between Oyasama's life and ours.
- The Divine Model gives us power to deal with the problems in our real lives.
- Huge task of passing the Divine Model on to the next generation.
- Why did God choose a woman to be our Model in that time in history of Japan?
- The Divine Model helps us find our own path in life.
- It is important to have a liberty/individuality in forming opinions.
- Talking about following the Divine Model lead to discussion on the dilemma of personal desire/pressure to conform to your parents.
- The main theme is on practicing true sincerity and having a Parental Heart.

## Power of Hinokishin

Sachie Yamanaka

(Ms. Yamanaka and her husband Shugo resides in Yamatomakoto Branch Church located south of Jiba)

*Hinokishin* is one of the terms most commonly used in Tenrikyo. As indicated by the Second Shinbashira's famous formula of the three defining principles for Yoboku—"spirit of single-heartedness with God, attitude of *hinokishin*, and harmony of minds in unity," one cannot be truly Tenrikyo without having an attitude of *hinokishin*. Yet, ironically, *hinokishin*, precisely because of its very importance in Tenrikyo, has become so familiar a word to us that its profound and powerful meaning is now actually taken too much for granted and, I regret to say, it is often taken lightly.

For example, a mother, preparing dinner in the kitchen or doing some house chores, would say to a child, "Can you do *hinokishin* for me?" meaning "please help me or run an errand for me." In another instance, we would often use or hear the phrases like "please do this as *hinokishin*" or "I'll do this as *hinokishin*," meaning "free of charge" or "without expecting any reward." I'm not saying that these are entirely bad and impermissible. When using the word *hinokishin* this way, most people do so with good intentions. I'm afraid, however, that such a usage of the word *hinokishin* could actually lead to a superficial, insufficient, or even incorrect understanding of its real meaning.

This presentation, therefore, will be an attempt to restore the power of *hinokishin* by taking a look at it from a fresh perspective.

The term, *hinokishin*, combining *hi-no* and *kishin*, is a word very unique to Tenrikyo, which was taught by Oyasama. *Hi-no* means "daily" or "everyday." *Kishin*, in its original usage, meant giving a monetary donation or contribution to a local Shinto shrine or Buddhist temple, usually upon request, on a special occasion such as the construction of a new building in its precinct. (Usually rich people would give a lot of donations, expecting a great merit.) Combining these two words, *hinokishin* literally means "daily contribution."

But what Oyasama taught with this new word was not about giving monetary donations everyday, as people may have imagined. What Oyasama taught with the word *hinokishin* is making daily or constant contributions to

God the Parent in the form of physical actions—actions that express joy and gratitude to God the Parent for the blessings given everyday. This is something that anyone, rich or poor, young or old, can do without much effort. *Kishin* was given a totally new meaning in *hinokishin*.

People must have wondered how, then, can our physical actions be contributions to God? The key to understanding this is the truth of “a thing lent, a thing borrowed.” This is what makes our physical actions into contributions to God. That is, *hinokishin* presupposes the deep awareness that we borrow our bodies from God the Parent and that the functioning of our bodies is possible through the complete providence of God. Simply put, as we often say, we live by “being kept alive” by God the Parent!

This awareness should bring about a strong sense of joy and gratitude for God the Parent’s providence, and what springs forth from this sense of joy and gratitude is an action. *Hinokishin*, therefore, is any action arising from our genuine feeling of joy and gratitude for being kept alive by God the Parent. To put it the other way, the feeling of joy and gratitude to God the Parent is essential to *hinokishin*. It is also an expression of the state of being single-hearted with God. In other words, *hinokishin* is a physical as well as a spiritual response to, and a concrete expression of, wholeheartedly relying on the blessings of God the Parent that are bestowed upon our bodies and the world by way of the complete providence.

Oyasama taught us to awaken to the very existence and the blessings of God the Parent, sustaining our life on earth, and taught us to do *hinokishin* as the way to respond to God’s blessings. It becomes obvious that *hinokishin* is not meant to be done only on some occasions. In so far as *hinokishin* is an action arising from the genuine feeling of joy and gratitude for being kept alive by God the Parent, it should be done daily, constantly, or at all times, as the word *hino* indicates. This is because such a feeling of joy and gratitude for God the Parent’s blessings should exist in every single moment of one’s life as long as he/she has the awareness of being kept alive. In this sense, we can say that *hinokishin* represents the most visible and basic daily attitude of faith for Tenrikyo followers.

One might say, however, “If *hinokishin* is an action arising from the joy and gratitude for being kept alive by God, then it is only possible when we are in good health and when all things are going well for us.” That is, when we are

sick or when things are not going well for us, we cannot possibly have a feeling of joy or gratitude under such circumstances. Therefore, *binokishin* as an expression of joy and gratitude would not be possible! But we know this is not what Oyasama taught.

Oyasama taught us that we can be joyous and spirited all the time under any circumstance by having a complete trust in God the Parent. Once we become aware of the great blessings and the deep parental love of God the Parent, we come to realize that just the fact we are alive now by being kept alive is a reason enough to make us joyous and grateful no matter what our circumstances may be. Indeed Oyasama Herself demonstrated such a way of living throughout the 50 years of Her Divine Model.

Furthermore, Oyasama taught, when we have a complete trust in God the Parent, we come to accept all things befalling us—even undesirable misfortunes—positively as divine guidance from God. Even when we are hit with a trying illness, difficult trouble or sad event, we can still accept it positively and joyously as an expression of God’s intention, as the very manifestation of God’s deep parental love, for us to grow spiritually through it.

So no matter what happens to us, we can always keep ourselves joyous and spirited. This mental attitude is taught as *tanno*, “joyous acceptance,” which I think is the very strength of our faith. *Tanno* is the true affirmation of our being on the firm ground of faith in God. And this mental or inner attitude of joyous acceptance does not stay within. It naturally finds its way out as *binokishin*. It can be said then that our joyous acceptance, or our joy of faith, is expressed as *binokishin* and it is transmitted to others around us through *binokishin*. Thus the greater the joyous acceptance we attain, the more *binokishin* it brings about. The more *binokishin* we do, the more our joy of faith spreads.

Having talked about what *binokishin* is, the difference between *binokishin* and volunteer work should be very clear now. It is often said that what we do as *binokishin* may be very similar in appearance to what people do as volunteer work. This is true especially when we are engaged in *binokishin* such as cleaning public places or reaching out for people in need of help. To non-Tenrikyo people, what we do looks no different from volunteer work.

However, *binokishin* goes beyond the normal level of social ethics of mutual help. It presupposes the connection of human beings with God the Parent, which is the essence of human existence. In other words, *binokishin* springs out

from the mind of gratitude for God the Parent's blessings, which keep us alive. This is the basic and great difference between *hinokishin* and volunteer work. Both *hinokishin* and volunteer work result in helping, saving, or benefiting others. But *hinokishin* is the means through which to express our joy of faith and moreover to advance ourselves towards the Joyous Life. No matter what *hinokishin* we do, we should always have the awareness that we are actually participating in God's salvation through *hinokishin*.

In fact, the understanding of the word *hinokishin* may be different from person to person even within Tenrikyo. Even so, what is important is that each person comes to have a mind of helping and saving others and actually engage in the act of helping and saving others. That is because the concrete act of *hinokishin* based on the mind of joy and gratitude for God the Parent's blessings takes place in his or her relationships with others in society. The gentle mind of helping others seen in the act of *hinokishin* is the very mind of "true sincerity" that God the Parent desires to see.

According to Tenrikyo cosmology, the purpose of God the Parent in creating human beings was to see us human beings live the Joyous Life. In other words, we human beings are essentially meant to be able to live the Joyous Life, helping and supporting each other as true brothers and sisters. This is the very essence of human existence, which is taught as the original causality. However, with the God-given freedom of the mind, having accumulated dusts and *innen* over many years since the creation, we human beings have developed a tendency to use our mind in a self-centered way, contrary to God's intention. It may be said that we human beings in the present society are always fluctuating between the two poles of the self-centered mind and the mind of helping and saving others, with a great majority standing closer to the pole of the self-centered mind.

The power of *hinokishin*, then, lies in helping us move away from the pole of the self-centered mind and getting us closer and closer to the mind of helping and saving others, the very mind desired by God the Parent. So it may also be said that even if one doesn't have enough of an understanding of *hinokishin*, he or she moves towards the pole of the mind of helping and saving others, almost unknowingly, by engaging in *hinokishin*. Thus *hinokishin* is a pragmatic teaching very unique to Tenrikyo.

So let's do *hinokishin*, and let's spread *hinokishin*.

## Significance of Hinokishin

Chikara Iburi

(Mr. Iburi is a resident staff member at Tenrikyo Church Headquarters)

In the first lecture by Mrs. Sachie Yamanaka, we grasped the important point of *hinokishin*. We figured out that *hinokishin* is any action which arises from the feeling of gratitude to the blessings of God the Parent.

Finding out the meaning of the word is very important; however, *hinokishin* is not merely a word describing something imagined or pictured in the mind. Its significance will appear only when it is taken into real action. For instance, we all must know the meaning of the word “eat.” However, even if you know the meaning of the word “eat,” it doesn’t do anything to actually nourish us. To realize the true meaning of the word “eat,” you have to actually eat something and enjoy the blessings of food. Thus, to realize the true meaning of *hinokishin*, we need to talk, not only what *hinokishin* is about, but how we can apply it to our daily lives and take it into action.

### Attitude of *Hinokishin*

First of all, I’d like to look for the hint of how we can apply *hinokishin* to our daily lives in the formula of the three defining principles for Yoboku as indicated by the second Shinbashira, who said, “Spirit of single-heartedness with God, attitude of *hinokishin*, and harmony of minds in unity.” What do you imagine when you hear “attitude of *hinokishin*”? I suppose many people have the image of *hinokishin* as picking up litter, picking weeds, or any cleaning activities, or those sort of actions. But, when the word “attitude” is put together with *hinokishin*, what does it tell you? I figured out that the form of *hinokishin*, that is to say, what you do as an action, does not matter so much, because an action is just an outcome of a particular feeling or way of thinking about something. We are taught that *hinokishin* is an expression of the joy of faith. Therefore, what is most important about *hinokishin* is whether we have this feeling, the joy of faith, in our heart, or not. Are we just doing it because we are told to do it, or are we doing it with the feeling of joy and spirited mind? When we talk about *hinokishin*, it’s not what we do, but our attitude that has to be questioned. In other words, as long as we feel the joy of faith in our heart,

and take some actions from the feeling of gratitude toward God's providence, anything can be *hinomokishin*. In that sense, *hinomokishin* can be put into practice by anyone, anytime, anywhere. It doesn't matter how strong you are, and it doesn't take any special ability to do *hinomokishin*. Maybe, only a word that makes people smile is good enough. Maybe, one smile that makes people feel happy is good enough. It's our willingness to do anything to show our gratitude to God the Parent's parental love and to please God the Parent and Oyasama. I think, that is an "attitude of *hinomokishin*." Anyone can do it anywhere at anytime.

#### Working Together in *Hinomokishin*

When we talk about the significance of *hinomokishin*, there is another aspect that has to be taken into account. *Hinomokishin* is any attitude or action which arises from a strong sense of gratitude for God the Parent's providence. In a sense, *hinomokishin* can be said as an expression of individual faith. However, limiting its meaning as an expression of individual faith makes the significance of *hinomokishin* much smaller than what it is supposed to be. In the Mikagura-uta, the Songs for the Service, the following verse indicates that:

Husband and wife working together in *hinomokishin*;  
This is the first seed of everything.

Mikagura-uta XI:2

The joy expressed in the effort does not remain confined to us alone but spreads its influence, inducing others to join in, and thus, comes to be joyousness that is shared. God the Parent says, "Husband and wife working together in *hinomokishin*." When husband and wife work spiritedly in *hinomokishin* daily, each helping and encouraging the other, their happiness will overflow and harmony and brightness will fill their home. This is taught by the phrase "the first seed of everything." The joy of a single home will spread its influence through the neighborhood. Many others will come to join the activity of *hinomokishin* and the joy of united hearts will pervade the world. This is how the world of the Joyous Life desired by God the Parent will make its appearance.

This spreading from one person to another is certainly not the purpose of *hinomokishin*, but such is a natural outcome of *hinomokishin* done with pure sincerity. Thus, *hinomokishin* is basically considered to be an individual action, but when this

action is put together as a group and performed with the unity of mind, the significance of *binokishin* will grow much more.

### Saving Others

*Hinokishin* is a faithful, day-to-day practice conducted in our daily lives. We know that the purpose of this practice is nothing other than the dedication to God the Parent to show our feeling of appreciation. Then, to fulfill its purpose, I wonder what the form of *binokishin* is supposed to be. What should we do? It has to be something God the Parent wants us to do. To get an answer, we need to pay attention to the following verses of the Ofudesaki.

And though each of you throughout the world  
has been pondering until now,

To My sorrow, no matter how deeply you have pondered,  
you have no mind to save others.

From now, Tsukihi requests you, everyone in the world,  
to replace your mind firmly.

To explain what kind of mind it is to be: it is none other than  
to save the world single-heartedly

Ofudesaki XII:89-92

As indicated by these verses, the intention of God the Parent is the world salvation that leads to the realization of the Joyous Life. To make it happen, God the Parent requests all the people in the world to have the mind to save others. We should bear this intention of God the Parent in mind, and dedicate ourselves in efforts of realizing the world of the Joyous Life with the mind of sincerity that desires to help others be saved. If such efforts to fulfill God's intention are to be the most appropriate form of *binokishin*, then, the act of helping and saving others should be a very important aspect of *binokishin*.

If all people in the world dedicate themselves in the efforts of *binokishin*, do what they can, and helping one another as they lead their lives, God the Parent will accept their minds, and humankind will be granted the blessing of the

reconstruction of the world as the world of the Joyous Life. Let's do *hinokishin* and let's spread the "attitude of *hinokishin*" throughout the world.

## Section Summary Report

Organizer: Chikara Iburi

We started our section with our first lecturer, Sachie Yamanaka, defining what *binokishin* is. “*Hino*” means “daily” or “everyday.” “*Kishin*” in its original usage, meant giving a monetary donation or contribution to a local Shinto shrine or Buddhist temple, usually upon a request, on a special occasion such as construction of a new building. Put the two words together and you have in a literal meaning, “daily contribution.” However, what Oyasama taught was not to give monetary donations daily, but to give physically with our actions. *Hinokishin* is any action rising from our genuine feeling of joy and gratitude of being kept alive. It is also an expression of the state of being single hearted with God.

Our second lecturer, Reverend Chikara Iburi, talked about the significance of *binokishin*. The action itself is not so important as actually doing *binokishin*. The action is an expression of the joy of faith. Therefore, it is most important whether we have the feeling of joy in our hearts. Physical Strength does not matter as a mere word can be *binokishin*.

When we work joyfully in *binokishin*, that feeling can spread to others as well. “Husband and wife working together in *binokishin*, this is the first seed of everything.” The joy from one’s home can emanate to its neighbors and can influence the whole area.

We had a special guest third speaker from Taiwan, Reverend Seita Mihama. He talked about the Disaster Relief Hinokishin Corps in Taiwan. This is the only relief corps outside of Japan. They have a system set up where when there is a natural disaster, a Hinokishin Corps can be out together immediately. In the past, they have aided in earthquake relief and the like. They had received so much public attention that they were written up in the major newspaper and the like.

Then, we had a special forth guest speaker, in fact, it was a so special that even the speaker had no idea that he was going to be asked. I called upon my good friend Tad Iwata, the Chairman of the Young Men’s Association in Hawaii, to share some of what they do in Hawaii. One of the major *binokishin* that they do is tree cutting. In Hawaii the trees grow very readily and such

work is often expensive. So, initially, they started cutting the trees of the local churches and then, by word of mouth, they started to receive requests from all over the island. Although, they refuse it, many give them generous contributions for their work. This has led to the strengthening of their bonds within the Association.

Throughout our discussion portion, the words “attitude” and “daily” came up often. We concluded that it is very important to do *binokishin* daily with an attitude of gratitude. So, to help everyone with ideas as to what one can do on a daily basis, we all shared at least one example of a *binokishin* that we can do daily. The list is as follows:

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Have a positive attitude.   | Be a good listener.       |
| Fill the empty water pitcher at work.                               | Pick up some trash.       |
| Translate Tenrikyo texts into Spanish.                              | Change my child's diaper. |
| Help a lost looking tourist.  | Greet people verbally.    |
| Thank the water for doing the cleaning.                             | Sweep the sidewalk.       |
| Help out around the house.  | Pull weeds.               |
| Say, “I love you” to your partner.                                  | Wipe the dusts.           |
| Give daily massages to your partner.                                | Talk to a lonely person.  |
| Administer the Sazuke.  | Be kind to animals.       |
| Smile.  | Be happy.                 |
| Straighten out the sandals to the bathroom.                         |                           |
| Give your seat to the elderly and expecting mothers.                |                           |
| Call your sister with 5 kids and offer to help more.                |                           |
| Keep a positive energy and let it rub off onto others.              |                           |
| Write letters to friends telling them how much you appreciate them. |                           |