

Tenchi Kane No Kami Grand Ceremony

Kami and us: Living with Kami

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Good morning everyone.

I hope you are all in good health and spirits.

Today we celebrate Tenchi Kane no Kami's Grand Ceremony.

I first entered the Konko Faith about 5 years ago, in 2011.

What brought me to the Konko Faith was a fateful turn of events.

In April of 2011, as usual I was coming home from high school. At the station, I noticed the bus route "113" that also could take me home, and since 13 is my lucky number, I decided to ride the bus instead of the train that day. Looking out the window I saw the Toronto church and noticed the "chigi" (kind of like small wooden planks) on the roof.

I thought they were only on Shinto shrines - but it said "Konko Church". I was confused so I googled, "Konko Church" and found the website and phone number. From there I called Rev. Kishii and met with him and talked about the faith. He gave me some books and materials.

I remember reading the biography of Konkokyo's founder, Konko Daijin, and becoming really moved by all of his experiences.

I first felt the desire to become a minister in April of 2013 during a ceremony, I had a kind of feeling from deep down, but I thought about it carefully. I wanted to help others, but I didn't need to be a minister to do so. I decided to wait until I was older and more mature to become one.

However in November of 2014 I was given the opportunity to become a minister as well as train in Japan. I felt this was the time to do so, so I accepted and ended up completing the training program and headed to Japan.

My time in Japan was really great. The most memorable time for me was the month in the Seminary School. I made many lifelong friends. I was shocked because despite our language and cultural barrier, we could connect so strongly. Even the rest of the training helping out with various Summer festivals or events as well as the Konko Daijin Grand Ceremony, coming together, working together, and connecting past language and culture really showed me the power of a heart-to-heart connection and connecting to others so deeply only through heart and soul. It helped me realize it's the same with Kami-sama's, the Universe's connection to us even more strongly. Through our hearts and souls we connect the most.

Before this time in Japan, I tried to realize this as well.

I tried to be close to Kami-sama – the Universe, living with Kami-sama in my daily life.

From 2012-2014, My family faced many difficulties –

My Mom was diagnosed with Thyroid cancer, and it was a really scary time for me. It was very intense because if she hadn't checked when she did, the cancer could have spread to her lymph nodes, and then her entire body. We didn't know what kind of procedure or treatment she'd need, but miraculously everything went very smoothly – the surgery and after treatment, and she was able to recover completely. A year later my older sister also developed Thyroid cancer. Her case was not as severe, but still difficult. For her as well though, she was able to recover completely. I felt immensely grateful for them to survive such an illness.

During this time I was praying for both of them so much, but it wasn't only prayer, but also asking Kami-sama on how I myself could help them and support them in this struggle as well. I didn't feel so alone or afraid in that time, knowing Kami-sama, the Universe, was with me helping me. Despite the circumstances, I felt so grateful I didn't have to feel alone in such a time or afraid. I knew whatever would happen, Kami-sama, the Universe, was taking care of my family and I. This love of Kami extends to the entire world, and I felt so much comfort in that.

If it wasn't for the connection I gained with Kami-sama in that time, I know I would have thought my family was being punished and only be in despair – but instead, I felt comfort, strength, and even gratitude.

That's when I noticed the key teaching of Konkokyo that really helped me past this difficult time:

Aiyo Kakeyo, Kami needs us as much as we need Kami – mutual fulfillment between us and Kami.

I realized that the Universe, Kami-sama, isn't like a far off deity, but exactly is within ourselves as well is the spirit of nature, our entire world. Our relationship between us and Kami-sama, the Universe, works exactly like nature.

Like an ecosystem, everything works together in harmony and everything needs each other. The teaching of aiyo kakeyo, the mutual fulfillment between us and the universe is the same pattern among nature in harmony. I felt, how beautiful this is, and I wanted and still want to never forget it and always practice this relationship with the Universe. Kami-sama and ourselves is like an ideal parent and child. The ideal parent protects, supports, and loves their child, and the child relies on but can also help and support the parent as well in their behaviour and personal development. In this way both can complete each other.

Thanks to Kami-sama, my family, and my heart and mind, were really saved.

That's why, I believe this so deeply in my heart, it's really special for each of us to grow, and nurture our individual relationships with Kami-sama, the Universe.

And, it's not hard at all. It's really just living with mindfulness day to day.

Realizing our blessings and not taking things for granted, being thankful for the food that sustains us and helps us live, the people who've helped us in our lives, having respect for nature and taking care of nature, taking care of ourselves and our loved ones...all this type of living is living in harmony with the Universe, and living with Kami-sama day to day.

It completely makes your entire being, soul, mind, body, at ease and comfort.

That's why we should never lose ourselves, never lose our connection to the Universe and our inner spirit, and try to nurture the connection to become healed, strong, grateful, and in harmony and joy.

That's why, Aiyo Kakeyo is such a strong teaching to me: mutual fulfillment between you and Kami-sama, the Universe. You become in peace, bringing harmony to your family, friends, and community, and helping to ease suffering and pain in the world.

Thank you all for listening.

I hope you have a wonderful day today and let's enjoy the rest of today – knowing we are never alone, and keeping close to Kami-sama.