

# *Ikigami Konko Daijin Grand Ceremony*

S e r m o n   O c t o b e r   1 1 ,   2 0 2 0

Good morning! Happy Sunday in this New Week of Kami's blessings! Thank you very much for taking time to attend our 2020 Ikigami Konko Daijin Grand Ceremony here at KC Chicago. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, attendance today is limited. I really appreciate that many of you are offering prayers with us from your homes in Chicago, in other states & other countries, too. I hope each one of you are in good health & excellent spirits on this wonderful autumn morning.

More than seven months have passed since the outbreak of the coronavirus. We humans cannot see it. We don't clearly know how we're infected by it or how to avoid it. People were afraid and for a while seemed to totally stop any of their activities around the world. In spite of tireless human efforts, there will be no sign of it ever coming to an end.

Now is the time for all human beings to realize that we are powerless; we have no ability & no talent before Kami-sama. So, we should pray to Kami all the time. We should trust in Kami for whatsoever it might be. Then belief will be born, as Kami said to our Founder, "Those who have faith should not worry about the unexpected."

Now is the time to answer three fundamental questions: *What is a human being? For what purpose are we born? And What is faith?*

I have always kept these questions in mind to seek the true answers which Kami wishes for us. While doing so, the lyrics of 'Anpanman's March' always echoes in my mind.

*How great it is to live, even with a scar aching in my heart.  
What was I born for? What do I do in my life?  
I dislike not being able to answer the questions.*

How great & meaningful these lines are! This is from the theme song of the Japanese children's anime TV show. Don't you think it vitally important to repeatedly seek for the real purpose of life? Shouldn't we consciously be asking: "What are we born in this world for? What should we do in this world NOW?"

It is then, I again have come to realize the greatest purpose of life that anyone can & should have is to *polish the gem of our hearts* while we are alive in this world. Our Founder taught, "Remember, this Universe always has been & will always be your home." We humans are born in this universe & return to the universe. Therefore, while alive in this world it's most important to develop our heart to totally agree with that of the universe, that is, with *Kami's Heart*. The peaceful joyful heart is that of *being one with Kami*. We human beings are born in this world to train ourselves to have unbreakable peace & joy in our heart.

In order to achieve this remarkable heart which brings us divine blessings without wishing or asking, we should have a strong conviction that *everything that happens is Kami's sacred doing*, or that *all is Divine Love*.

Our Founder received the following revelation in the 15th year of Meiji, 1882:

*Those who have faith should not worry about the unexpected. There will be unexpected illnesses not only in summer, but also in winter. No one is aware of the blessings of Heaven & Earth which enable people to live. Kami shall have people become aware of the blessings of Heaven & Earth by having Konko Daijin be born throughout the world where the sun shines, in every country, without exception.*

When explained, everyone understands such blessings of Heaven and Earth with which we cannot survive without, such as the air we breathe, the water we drink, etc. Then what are the blessings of Heaven & Earth that no one is aware of? Here, I believe, Kami teaches us that even unexpected illnesses are divine blessings. So is the coronavirus. If so, Konko Daijin is the person who realizes *each & every happening is Kami's doing*, and *all is Divine Love*. Konko Daijin, our Founder, is the first very person who had this realization and gives off this *light of faith*.

To save the world right now in the midst of an unexpected illness called, coronavirus, Kami keenly wishes Konko Daijin to be born throughout the world in every country without exception. Therefore, how can we manifest this wish of Kami while Konkokyo is still such a tiny religious organization in the world? When we compare the Konko faith with other religions, we are apt to think why this true *Way of Konko* has not spread in the world. It appears to be impossible to accomplish this wish of Kami.

We should think of this matter through Kami's eye. *Tenchi Kane No Kami* is a kami that has existed since the beginning of time. Therefore, this Way, or the splendid idea of this faith, has spread all over the world from the beginning. It's just that people aren't yet aware of it. Kami has already prepared all over the world for Konko Daijin, who is aware of the real blessings of Heaven and Earth. Then why hasn't Konko Daijin yet emerged?

Our Founder wrote in 1877 the following revelation:

*How is Konko written? It is written with kanji characters for 'golden light.' Any person is inclined to look toward light. Gradually, people will come toward the light.*

The world has been getting dark before this pandemic by the fact that people are inclined to be selfish and think only of themselves. The coronavirus has made it worse. We should change this situation. Now people all over the world are seeking for the true light to make this world bright. Thus, we have a great opportunity to have Konko Daijin be born throughout the world. And at the same time the true value of Konkokyo will be tested.

I really believe people in the world will start to be aware of the true blessings of Heaven and Earth and become interested in the Konko Faith, because Konkokyo is the true light to brighten the world. In response to this light, from now on, Konko Daijin will naturally appear one after another in the world.

It is thus most important for each such '*bud* of Konko Daijin' to deepen their faith and become a real Konko Daijin Kami so wishes in order to manifest the true blessings of Heaven and Earth in the world and make the world the brightest place.

From here it is our turn. We, Konko believers ourselves, should become real figures of Konko Daijin. For that we should respect each & every happening as Kami's sacred doing more precisely than ever to develop unbreakable peace & joy in our hearts to the extent that they would radiate & shine from within. I will do my best to do so, and will lead those '*buds* of Konko Daijin' in the world to become genuine Konko Daijins to save the world.