

ON THE DOCTRINE OF TENRI-KYŌ

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The Tenri-kyō religion was founded in 1838 in the district of Yamato, the central part of Japan, in accordance with a divine revelation to Miki Nakayama by God the Parent. God Who is the creator and protector of all mankind revealed Himself through Miki Nakayama, taking Her as His living Temple, and through Her lips revealing His will of saving the whole of mankind. God is worshipped in Tenri-kyō as God the Parent, and the Foundress as *Oyasama*, our Beloved Parent.

The Foundress, finding people unable to understand God the Parent's revelation and unwilling to listen to His teachings, endeavored to guide them by all means towards the understanding of God the Parent. By Her words, by Her writings, and by Her personal life She taught them the truth of God the Parent's revelation, never begrudging Her efforts in enlightening them, because She wished them to be thoroughly convinced of the teachings of God the Parent. Her personal life was especially inspiring to those who were apt to neglect the practice of faith in their daily life, however familiar they might have been with the teachings. Besides She worked numberless miraculous healings before their eyes, saying " This

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is the Way of faith in practice." Moreover, She showed people how such miraculous recovery was possible by teaching them through various cases and concrete facts that they themselves could be saved in this way once they had come to reform themselves so thoroughly as to be acceptable to God the Parent.

Then God the Parent taught them *tsutome* (literally, duties or devotional service, Ed.) as the mysterious working of the Way through which they could obtain this salvation, and at the same time granted missionaries the privilege of practising *sazuke*, (literally, a gift or offering, Ed.), *Tsutome* is religious service, performed by people with their hearts united, through which they are granted the salvation of God the Parent by virtue of the marvellous power which was proved at the time of creation. Through *tsutome* God the Parent is urging people today to embody in their lives *yorozu-tasuke* or the saving grace of all things that appear in the whole course of life: food, daily necessities, everyday surroundings, and so on. The ability to grant to believers His gift of *sazuke*, which saves mankind from pain and disease, is bestowed on missionaries, after determining their sincerity. That salvation is now granted through these two means is simply because God the Parent, the Creator has appeared again in this world as God the Parent, the Savior.

Now the people of the world are in the midst of various troubles and misfortunes. This is because they make improper use of the mind which has been given them as their own; and they are unable to receive the divine protection of God the Parent in their lives because the mind is unable to fulfill its original mission. Taking pity on their state, God the Parent guides them into the right path by urging them to reform.

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Now, as is taught by God the Parent, “our souls will live through all the ages,” — the salvation of the infinite soul by God the Parent is not temporal but eternal. Thus salvation has come to be a universal and true salvation. It is neither merely salvation of the soul nor of the flesh but is the salvation of man himself, body and soul together, which in turn has come to be not only the salvation of the individual but of society at large. Of course salvation requires that the state of supreme bliss shall be realized on earth, but it also requires that the blissful state be not temporal but eternal.

God the Parent revealed Himself at first as the “original and true God,” — later as *Tsuki-Hi* and as *Oya*. According to Tenri-kyō doctrine on the origin of the world and of mankind, in which the original relation between God the Parent and mankind was revealed, mankind was created by God the Parent in order that man might live a joyous life. In other words the original purpose of Creation was that mankind should live a joyous life. And as is further shown in the doctrine, under the protection of God the Parent mankind has gradually reached its present maturity. That is why it is said that we are all children of God the Parent, and as such are now and ever will be protected and saved by Him.

Moreover, this protection of God the Parent, we are taught, is perfect all over the world, and this perfect protection has been explained in detail by God the Parent, giving sacred names to each part of His work. This is the *tohashira-no-kamina*, that is, the sacred names of ten deities. But this does not mean that there are actually ten deities. On the contrary these are conceived of as representing merely different parts

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of the providence of God the Parent, which preside over man and the world in five pairs. Each pair is composed of two opposite phases of providence, which in the end are reduced to the Divine Reason of one pair, the Divine Reason of *Tsuki-Hi*. God the Parent has given these many names of deities merely because He wishes to make people understand how their bodily functions are kept in order by Him.

At another time, God the Parent, saying "This universe is My own body," taught us that the world is full of divine grace even to the remotest corner. Indeed, not only can we see this grace manifested in such elemental forces as fire, water, and wind, but also we can feel it, though invisible, ruling as the Reason of Heaven. Furthermore we are taught that we live between the embrace of heaven and earth, in the very bosom our real Parent basking in His boundless benevolence; and from this we can see why God the Parent is the almighty God of absolute wholeness. This is our God the Parent. This God has appeared as our real Parent and our ultimate Savior. He has come to unfold His will and to make us enjoy the true happiness of life by our reformation. He has given the name of Jiba to the place where God the Parent created the human race, and He has also given the Holy name of *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*. So we Tenri-kyō followers worship God the Parent at Jiba. Indeed God the Parent, the Foundress, and Jiba are one in truth, and through the existence of this truth, we shall be granted a wonderful salvation . . . This is the main point of the Tenri-kyō faith.

Now there are many people in the world who are beset by various kinds of troubles and misfortunes; and they cannot

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comprehend why they have come to be in trouble or suffer from misfortune. But concerning this God the Parent has taught us that through these troubles He is warning people to mend their ways, for fear they may get into worse trouble or misfortune. This is called *tebiki*, or divine guidance.

Furthermore, God the Parent, saying "I lend you your body and you borrow your body from Me," explains the reason for *kashimono* ("things loaned") and *karimono* ("things borrowed"), that is, why we are lent our bodies by Him and why we borrow our bodies from Him. He teaches us that it is because we are under His divine protection with respect to everything requisite to the preservation of our bodies. But we do not comprehend this truth and, valuing our selfish desires beyond everything, we are apt to use our minds against His will, despite His fervent desire to make us all live in joyous harmony. God the Parent warns us against such a selfish use of the mind, likening it to the accumulation of dust in the physical world. So when we find ourselves covered with such dust from misuse of the mind, we must try to cleanse our minds of the dust; we must try to reform ourselves. Then we shall be able to have a clear mind suitable to enjoy a joyous life. Thus God the Parent teaches, and He enumerates eight kinds of dust by name, so as to help us reflect upon ourselves.

Needless to say, particles of dust are essentially things so light and minute that we can blow them away with a single puff of breath. Therefore, if we sweep or wipe them off soon enough, we can clear them away with ease, but if we leave them through our negligence for a long time, we find that it is not an easy task to clear them away, for it is in their nature

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to heap themselves high quite imperceptibly. God the Parent, taking pity on our negligence and selfish use of the mind, gives us warnings in the form of various kinds of disease and trouble, so as to afford us the best opportunity for ridding our minds of such dust ; and on such occasions we must try to come nearer to His profound intention by reforming ourselves in response to His warning and, accepting whatever happens to us as an expression of the Divine Will, advance in the Way of faith in high spirits with thanksgiving towards God the Parent. This way of governing the mind, God the Parent teaches us by means of *tannō*, which is neither mere resignation nor perception of His goodness in whatever happens to us and the ever firmer determination to live a joyous life. Such a mental attitude can never fail to come out in our daily conduct, and our joyful gratitude towards God the Parent will naturally seek expression in our actions. Such an expression, God the Parent terms *hinokishin*, the holy dedication of life in joyful gratitude.

When we live a life of joyful gratitude towards God the Parent, we come to aspire to fulfill His will and it becomes impossible for us to sit idly by when others are in trouble and to remain aloof from their suffering. Naturally we desire them to be saved and we try to do for them whatever lies in our power. The mind governed by such a desire is most suitable and most acceptable to His will. It is the mind attitude that is taught by God the Parent as *mako-to-shinjitsu* or true sincerity. Whenever we attain this true sincerity and devote ourselves in prayer to God the Parent, glorifying Him as *Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto*, we shall surely be accepted by Him and

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be assured of every help.

The world today aspires to peace; but world peace worthy of the name cannot be brought about by the mere abandonment of conflict. The cessation of conflict, though it may bring an external peace to the world, will not in itself produce ultimate peace for the world. We must needs, I think, consider the problem of world peace from the point of view that the people of the world, though seemingly different in appearance, are all children of God the Parent and as such are equal. Here I want to emphasize that when we, the children of God the Parent, come to live in perfect harmony with our hearts united in helping one another, there will surely be realized on earth a world of joyous life, a world of true peace which is so much desired by God the Parent as the final object of His Way. So we Tenri-kyō people are now steadily advancing towards the realization of a truly peaceful world on earth, following the precept and example given by the Foundress.

Kanji Glossary

hinokishin ひのきしん (日の寄進)	Tenri-kyō 天理教
liba ちば (地場)	Tenri-Ō-no-Mikoto 天理王命
karimono かりもの (借りもの)	tohashira-no-kamina 十柱の神名
kashimono かしもの (貸しもの)	Tsuki-Hi 月日
makoto-shinjitsu 誠真実	tsutome つとめ (勤め)
Nakayama, Miki 中山みき	Oya 親
Nakayama, Shōzen 中山正善	Oyasama 親さま (教祖)
sazuke さずけ (授け)	Yamato 大和
tannō たんのう (堪能)	yorozu-tasuke よろづたすけ (万づ
tebiki てびき (手引)	助け)