

TENSHO KOTAI JINGU-KYO (2)

The Testimony of Believers*

A sixty-three year old father.

It was toward the end of the summer vacation when my eldest son suddenly fell ill of appendicitis. Until then I had believed the teaching of the Buddha to be the truth and regarded the so-called new religions as a kind of fraud. I had also thought myself to be elevated above concern for life and death. But this self-confidence broke down miserably when I was told by my doctor that the coming night would be critical for my son. I was completely powerless. As I kept watch at his bed-side thoughts of the "Dancing Goddess," of whom I had once heard occurred to me. Without knowing why, almost unconsciously, I turned toward the province where she lives and prayed to her for his life. I kept doing so during the whole night. As the morning sun shone into the room, I felt somewhat relieved, and from that time my son began to recover. Thus, his illness was the occasion of my turning to the true God.

On October 18th., the Great Goddess (*Ōgamisama*^a) came to Beppu. It was evening and a full moon shone on Mt. Takasaki overlooking the harbor. That evening several thousand

a. 大神様

* It should hardly be necessary to point out to the readers that the purpose of the editor in printing these testimonies, Mrs Kitamura's sermon, and similar material is to provide "primary" sources for students of religion. Critical studies will also be published from time to time. Ed.

believers from all over Kyūshū danced the dance of non-self (*muga no mai*^a) at the pier. They danced in several circles, making a whirl. It seemed to me as if I were looking at a vision of heaven, and I was deeply impressed and moved.

Before this I also had had occasion to attend a meeting with her. She then preached in the following strain: "Receive malevolence with thankfulness and a smile. As long as you cannot do that, you cannot be our true comrade." When I heard this I realized that this was a true, living Goddess. (*Tensei*^b, May 1955, No. 17 pp. 34)

A young doctor with tuberculosis

I was in financial distress, and because I had tuberculosis I could not begin my practice even though I had graduated from a medical college. I was in a state of depression. Still I was very anxious to do my work as a doctor and to seek the truth.

One day, without any definite purpose in mind, I went to my aunt's home in Beppu, when I met a believer of the Great Goddess, who told us of the dance of non-self (*muga no mai*) which was to be danced that day in public. At first I felt only revulsion, but this disappeared when I was told that the dance was the same as that performed in antiquity by the heavenly maiden at Miho-no-matsubara.*

In the evening, when several believers gathered for a "mutual polishing" (*tomo-migaki*^c) meeting, what impressed me most

a. 無我の舞 b. 天声 c. 共磨

* 三保の松原 "The Pine Grove of Miho." A story found in the *Hagoromo Densetsu* 羽衣伝説. (*Legend of the Robe of Feathers*) which is supposed to have taken place in Shizuoka 静岡 prefecture.

was the declaration of these people that they did not ask the help of doctors even in cases involving the most serious diseases. They said that if one only recited the formula, *na-myō-hō-rangē-kyō*^a, one did not need any doctor. This was said as if it were a matter of course, and it seemed to me that there was something like the invincible authority of God in it.

I stayed overnight with my aunt and during the course of the evening I was persuaded by one of them to go to the center at Tabuse where the Great Goddess lived. Two days later I went there, heard her preaching, and was saved. (*Ten-sei*, March 1955, No. 15 p. 33)

A seventeen year old repatriate

After the end of World War II we had to give up our home abroad and return to Japan. But my father died on the return trip, so I was left with my old mother and my younger and older sisters.

We arrived in this country with nothing but the clothes on our backs, and life at home was anything but peaceful. It was quite contrary to my expectations. As our family had been well off, I had known none of the difficulties of making a living, and so was almost at my wit's end. However, I somehow managed to get a job and lived with my aunt's family. But since her family had many members too, it was not easy to earn enough money to support them all.

At last my elder sister went away without telling us where she was going, so I was left alone with my old mother and younger sister. I was only 17 years of age. Moreover, my

a. 名妙法蓮結經

aunt was not kind to us. Many a time she mistreated us and so I was quite unhappy.

One day, on my way to work, I found a poster on a roadside pole telling about the Great Goddess. Then a woman in the neighbourhood told me about her in detail, and taught me to pray morning and evening, which I did. She explained to me that the teachings of the Great Goddess were not for the healing of diseases but for the improvement of our personality, that men were born into this world in order that their souls might be polished.

One week later I began to attend regularly the "mutual polishing" (*tomo-migaki*) meetings and from then on my sufferings became less. I began to find pleasure in my work. (*Tensei*, August 1955, No. 20, p. 30)

The mother of a retarded child

In spite of my son's advanced age he could not walk. Naturally, I was very much worried. One day my husband's friend, who was a doctor, took him for a medical examination. X-rays were taken, but nothing abnormal could be found. Then my mother-in-law insulted me and I spent my days in sorrow.

After two or three months I went to my parents, who lived in Yamaguchi, and my mother was very much surprised to see that my son was unable to walk. She was a believer of Tenshō Kōtai Jingū-kyō and took him to the polishing hall. For about a week we visited the hall everyday, and finally we got the chance to speak personally to the Great Goddess.

No sooner had she seen the child, than she said: "The child is possessed by an evil spirit which sits at the groin and

prevents nourishment from going into the limbs. That is why his legs are as thin as wire. If you will observe carefully my instructions, I will cure him so that he can walk in two weeks." Then she took the crying child and held him between her thighs while she continued to preach. After half an hour she let him stand up, patted his legs several times while she continued reciting *na-myō-hō-rengē-kyō*, and finally gave him back to me.

Three days later he could stand alone. The next day he could not only walk, but could run quite fast.

I am very happy to have had this occasion to receive the instructions of the Great Goddess. (*Tensei*, August 1955, No. 20, p. 36)

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