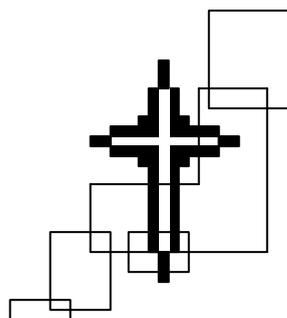


# INTERCESSORS FOR JAPAN

PRAY FOR THIS NATION  
Newsletter

October 15, 2001



Association of Intercessors for Japan

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## For Japanese “People’s Salvation” : its meaning and the Biblical Foundation

Kazuto Yukizawa

1 When a Christian says that he is “praying for Japan,” we often called it “revival” when a Japanese “as individual” was saved in the Lord and the number of saved individual increased significantly and we ceaselessly prayed for this to happen. Of course, our desperate wish is to see as many Japanese as possible to experience personally the true salvation and freedom in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is more than our wish, it is our “murmur” and “scream.” However, the problem rises beyond it. It is our question whether Christians can clearly “see” the figure of Japanese Christianity after the revival or the Christianized Japanese society, or whether we can present a precise vision as to “how this country will be transformed in Christ.” Against these proposals, we can expect repercussions such as “we can think about it after the revival,” “after the revival, God will lead us to his liking,” etc. If I look at this country’s situation with stern and objective eye, I feel that the single minded evangelism based on uncoordinated personal “salvation” without a strategy has even hindered obtaining a fruit of personal salvation. That is to say what we can learn from the real condition of Japanese mission to this day is that we need to

drastically change the individualistic mission paradigm (the frame of thought and action). Because, the Japanese thought and action pattern always presupposes one’s self-identity as a member in the “community” to which he belongs. Against such background it is easy to see it can not be accepted as the valuable salvation by the Japanese by presenting the individualistic “salvation” without consideration to such “community” or presenting it only as the opposing force to personal salvation. Rather, we should talk about the salvation of the “community” to which they belong in addition to personal “salvation” and present clearly its vision. “Your salvation is only the beginning; it is your mission specially given by God to reach out to the community. It is important to encourage and motivate them. I believe it is important to vigorously present how Japan and its culture will change as the result of revival—not as loss of history or forgetting the past, but as a way of an encounter and fulfillment! I am certain the the “Intercessors for Japan,” too, will do very important work based on the above views in the body of Christ, the Church.

2 The problem is how this kind of the “Japanese people’s salvation” can be Biblically based. I have already explained the fundamental theory to explain this in an editorial of the Revival Shimbun (hereafter, it is referred to as the Revival new discourse). In it I

have developed the “atoned Japanese nationalism theory,” but I will write it again as a summary of the article.

(A) First of all, the great truth that man is created in the image of God is the beginning of the discussion. Human existence is fundamentally created as a spiritual existence that can commune with God. Then, how did the “original sin,” expulsion from the Garden of Eden, affect the human’s “Children of God” nature? It is not that we lost “Children of God” nature, but rather we corrupted our selves from God’s possessions to that of subservient to the Devil, and it should be understood as a “change in ownership: illegal seizure by the Devil.” The salvation by Jesus Christ is no other than repossession and recovery of Children of God nature that is genuinely the gift of God. If this is the case, one can say that the Children of God nature of those who are not yet saved by Christ was usurped illegally by the Devil but intrinsically they possess the gift of God as “possibility.” I will quote from the June 18, 2001 issue of the Revival new discourse.

“...the fall of man and his salvation is not a change in the essential nature of man as the form of God, rather it has to do with the “possessive relationship” or “social ranks and position” such as who belongs to whom or what. That is to say, it is the difference between belonging to God or the Satan. That is to say that it is the difference between God’s possession or Satan’s possession. The fact that man is totally corrupt in sin shows the condition that man cannot escape with his own power from Satan’s possession and bondage: “slave’s status and position” rather than man’s fundamental nature had changed. That is why if man is saved from Satan’s oppression (of course, he needs to be healed and freed), his unique and abundant humanity that was originally given to him will blossom. He will be changed into a Christ-like image (II Corinthians 3:18).

(B) If the position of those human beings that have not been saved by grace of Christ is like that, how can we interpret culture and an ethnic group created by such people?

(B-1) The ethnic and cultural phenomenon is indigenous to the human beings. This is because

man has personal existence, it is essentially “social” existence. And, “socializing” will create a “community.” Also, the personal existence means that man has the historical existence that has intrinsic historicity. This sense of community and historicity molds ethnicity and culture. I will quote from the June 18, 2001 issue of the Revival new discourse on this.

“By the way, man does not consist solely of soul but exists as person who has mind and body. Also, man has “social existence.” That is why men form the community and establish unique rules and communication methods that are special to the community. Here, the “culture” will be created. Of course, the life lies within the spirit. However, by embodiment of physical body the work of spirit will have its expressive form: culture. The fact God created man as personal existence, one can say that culture man creates is also the expression of God’s creation.”

(B-2) And, considering that the ethnicity and culture are fundamental conclusion to human existence and the conclusion of (B-1), the ethnicity and culture that are created by the people who are yet to be saved by the grace of Christ arise potentially from the fundamental nature of God’ children; one can say that they have possibility of possessing potential God’s gift. One can say that now they are only under control of Satan, and the gifts of God are being abused.

(B-3) Ethnicity and culture is originally full of variety and has unique characteristics. Considering the conclusion of (B-2) together with this, it can be said that God of Creation rejoice in diversity and individuality of ethnicity and culture that are created by man; rather, one can say that this diversity is characteristic of God’s creation. However, under Satan’s control this diversity and individuality is corrupted by sins such as the superiority complex, prejudicial feeling, mutual distrust, hate, and envy that becomes the source of curse.

(C) If Christ’s salvation can be applied to man as a person and essentially unique gifts of creation can be restored, the salvation and redemption of the ethnic group and culture will indeed occur at the “place of the individual’s experience.” That is because man as

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the personal existence intrinsically belong to the particular ethnic group and culture (world-inside-existence). And if we can say that the ethnic group and culture that rise out of personal existence, too, are essentially God's gifts of creation (B-2), it is unnatural and proper to think that man's individual salvation can be separated from the culture and ethnic group to which he belongs.

(D) And, if the ethnicity and culture are essentially diverse and individual (B-3), the salvation of the ethnicity and culture that take place in salvation of man's existence is equal to the restoration of individuality and in diversity. What it means is that when all people and ethnic groups worship and welcome the Lord Jesus, the king of Israel, as the king of kings, each diversity and individuality do not become the source of animosity and envy, but rather they are transformed into the blessings where the differences complement each other, help each other, and build each other. The fact that we can rejoice in diversity is indeed the shape of the God's country, I believe. The following is quoted from the June 18, 2000 issue of the Revival new discourse

"Society, civilization, and culture are no other than the expression of characteristics such as 'community,' 'historicity,' and 'regionalism.' And, if they are derived from the nature of "God's image," then these can also be said God's creations. Countries and societies that blossomed uniquely in each generation and each locality fundamentally conceals the expression of glory of God (Refer to Paul's saying after Acts 17: 26; or Deuteronomy 32: 8). God weighs heavily on personal aspects of man when saving and redeeming man, but he equally values also man's historical existence of belonging to certain civilization, culture, and community. That is to say that at the same time I was saved as an individual man I was saved as a contemporary Japanese, a man, and as those who exists in its history and culture. And when God's calling and his purpose that had been prepared for me is reclaimed, it cannot be considered separate from my identity as a modern Japanese man. So, the purpose and meaning of creation that God prepared for the Japanese nation and culture is first reclaimed and revealed through my existential salvation, and the

light is shed to the Japanese nation and culture through it. And, as many Japanese are being saved, many lights will shine on the Japanese nation. In this way the original purpose and meaning of the Japanese nation and culture itself will be reclaimed in the light of God.

(E) Let me list the Biblical passages that underwrite the above.

(E-1) It can be seen that the nation, age, ethnic group are indeed set all by divine law.

*"When the Most High gave the nation their inheritance, when he divided the sons of men...."*

Deuteronomy 32: 8

*"From one single stock he not only created the whole human race so that they could occupy the entire earth, but he decreed how long each nation should flourish and what the boundaries of its territory should be. And he did this so that all nations might seek the deity...."* Acts 17: 26

(E-2)

When you read the following passages in the Bible, it can be seen that the Lord give attention to other nationals and the peoples other than Israelites and promises salvation and redemption as the people.

*"That day, there will be an altar to Yahweh in the center of the land of Egypt and, close to the frontier, a pillar to Yahweh, which will be both sign and witness of Yahweh Sabaoth in the land of Egypt. When in oppression the Egyptians cry to Yahweh he will send them a savior to protect and deliver them. Yahweh will reveal himself to them, and that day the Egyptians will acknowledge Yahweh and worship him with sacrifices and offerings. They will make vows to Yahweh and perform them. Then, though Yahweh has struck the Egyptians harshly, he will heal them. That day, there will be a road from Egypt to Assyria. Assyria will have access to Egypt have access to Assyria. Egypt will serve Assyria.*

*That day, Isarael, making the third with Egypt and Assyria, will be blessed in the center of the world. Yahweh Sabaoth will give his blessing in the words, 'Blessed be my people Egypt, Assyria my creation, and Israel my heritage.'"*

Isaiah 19: 19-25

(E-3)

Zechariah, which is considered a prophesy for the millennium kingdom, describes a scene where various nation and people gathers to Jerusalem for the Passover festival.

*“All who survive of all the nations that have marched against Jerusalem will go up year by year to worship the King, Yahweh Sabaoth, and to keep the feast of Tabernacles. Should one of the races of the world fail to go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, there will be no rain for that one. Should the race of Egypt fail to go up and pay its visit, on it will fall the plague which Yahweh will inflict on each one of the those nations that fail to go up to keep the feast of Tabernacles. Such shall be the punishment for Egypt and for all the nations that fail to go up to keep the feast of Tabernacles.”*

Zechariah 14: 16-19

(E-4)

In Revelation 7: 9, it describes the heavenly worship scene where “people from every nation, race, tribe and language” that had been saved gather together in front of God and the Lamb. Here, they all are likely to have possessed apparent ethnic characteristics and uniqueness that can be easily comprehended by John. That is to say that they all stood in front of God as people and nation rather than as individual person. These differences will create the beautiful harmony: unity of diversity, in worshipping Christ, the Lamb. If the concept such as ethnicity and nationality had nothing to do with salvation and redemption of the Bible, these expressions are not necessary and meaningless.

A similar description appears in Revelation 21: 24-27.

*“The pagan nations will live by its light and the kings of the earth will bring it their treasures. The gates of it will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there—and the nations will come, bringing their treasure and their wealth.”*

Nations and the people are clearly maintained in the “new heaven and new earth” and “new Jerusalem” that are depicted here. What else these nations and the people that are mentioned here can be other

than the “redeemed” gentile (non-Jews) people!

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## Concept of Redemption That Existed in Japan

Arimasa Kubo

### Concept of redemption that existed in Japan

Concept of redemption existed in Japan from the ancient past.

Japanese Old Shintoism passed on a ceremony called the “Ceremony of Great Purification.” This is the ceremony that purifies all sins of Japan. This is performed at the Imperial Palace and various shrines on June 30 and December 31 every year.

At the time of the Ceremony of Great Purification, the Emperor comes dressed in a hemp clothing to the Hall for State Ceremonies. The hemp clothing is a clothing of criminals, the lowest form of clothing. The Emperor performs the Ceremony of Great Purification in a humble form.

When it is over, the clothing was placed on a small ship and let it flow into the Kamo River from Kyoto where the capital was at that time. They watched until the Naniwa-su in Osaka and disappeared in waves.

At that time, a certain prayer was cited.

What kind of prayer was cited then? It goes like this: Although the Imperial family descended from the Plain of High Heaven to govern the Land of Abundant Reed Plains and Rice Fields and the Japanese Archipelagos, many sins are committed throughout the land. These must be dealt with.

But, these sins are stubborn and hard to deal with them. So, the certain days are set and the Emperor will perform the ceremony of redemption as the high priest.

And entrusting that all sins and defilement are contained in the hemp clothing, they let it flow down

the river. Their prayer contains the stubbornness of sins and the necessity of redemption.

There are people who say, “the Japanese have no concept of sin.” However, the current Japanese may lack it but the ancient Japanese clearly possessed it in this way.

In Psalm 51 David was troubled greatly in dealing with sins. The ancient Japanese, too, were aware that sin cannot be easily dealt with. This can be seen from the prayer for the Ceremony of Great Purification.

The ancient Japanese troubled themselves in dealing with their sin. Sin cannot be easily wiped out. And the ancient Japanese thought that they cannot welcome the new year without dealing with their sin properly.

This is the same thought in the Old Testament. It is same as the custom of Azazel’s goat in Leviticus.

The Azazel’s goat was a sacrificial goat that the High Priest of Israel used. He placed his hand on the goat and said, “Oh God, please take the sins and those unspeakable transgression that the people of Israel committed far away and forgive all.” And he charged the goat with all sins of the people of Israel led it far away until you can not see it any more. And he watched until the goat of Azazel disappear into way yonder the horizon.

Then, he said, “Ah, our sins were carried to the unseen place; God will no longer see our transgressions. So, we shall not perish,” and thanked him. They repeated this ceremony every year.

Today’s Jews have a custom called Tashric. Since they no longer has the Temple in Jerusalem, they perform the ceremony of Tashric instead that of Azazel’s goat.

You hold on tightly a pebble in your hand. Hold on to it until the pebble reaches the same temperature as your own body. Then, go to either a lake or a river or the sea. There, you recall all of your past transgressions. After that, you read the passage of the chapter seven of Micha, “to the bottom of the sea throw all our sins.” Then, you throw the pebble as far as you can throw. You do this for the pebble and your sins were cast away together into the sea; it is farther removed from the sight of God.

This is the same as the concept of the Ceremony of Great Purification. In Japan, there is a practice of

floating a doll down the river stream. They all come from the same thinking. Azazel’s goat, Tashric, the Ceremony of the Great Purification, and the floating doll are based on the same thought, aren’t they?

If that is the case, the Japanese are the people who should be able to understand the salvation by the Cross. Why haven’t we realized this fact till today?

## Why does the Western Christianity not develop roots in Japan?

Many of missionaries who came to Japan first denied the Japanese tradition and culture, then they tried to implant the Christian faith.

Did Japanese ministers and evangelists also think that denying the Japanese tradition and culture was the way to implant the Christian faith to the Japanese?

However, there are many cases when what is written in the Bible can be better understood based on the Japanese tradition and culture. Standing on the Japanese tradition and culture, one can understand better the world of the Bible.

Why the Christianity does not spread in Japan, even many missionaries came to Japan? Why does not the Western Christianity develop roots in Japan? We should think carefully the reasons why.

The Christianity that denies all Japanese culture and tradition will never develop roots in Japan. Also, there is no need to deny the Japanese culture and tradition.

That is because the Japanese culture and tradition, in reality, provide the fertile soil to understand the real teaching of the Bible.

What would complete the Japanese tradition and realize it in the true sense?

It is the Gospel the Bible teaches us. The Gospel of the Jesus Christ is the one that makes the Japanese tradition and culture come alive and complete them.

## Shintoism and “Idol Worship”

We often associated a Shinto shrine with the “idol worship.”

Certainly, in the broad sense, if you regard any other God than the true God as god, it is the idol worship. Money or the realization of your desire, if you value it more than God it is the idol worship.

But, what can you say about it in the narrow sense?

To judge Shintoism as the idol worship is a trap that an evangelist who only learned the western theology falls into. Of course, I am not saying that there is nothing wrong with the present Shintoism.

For example, if you go to a Buddhist temple, there are many idols. They carve idols after the Buddha's image and worship them. But, there are no carved idols of god or gods in a Shinto shrine.

What is placed at a main shrine of a Shinto shrine? There are mirrors or pendant strips of paper. Do the Shinto believers regard them as god itself? No, they do not.

In Shintoism, they regard god as someone who cannot be seen by eye. So, they never make an idol. Mirrors and pendant strips of paper that are placed in a main shrine of the shrine merely designate the sacred place where the spirit of god descends.

The mirrors and pendant strips of paper that are placed in the main shrine is not placed there as idols.

In side the ancient Israel's tent, the three Sacred Treasures: the tablets of the Ten Commandments, Aaron's rod, and a pot of manna, are placed.

Those were not idols. They were placed there to indicate the sacred place where the God's spirit descended.

The mirrors and pendant strips of paper were placed in the main shrine for the same reason. The place was considered where the unseen god descended.

In Japanese Shintoism, the god is considered someone who cannot be seen by eye. Of course, there are many defects such as deteriorating to pantheism.

But, when you think carefully about it, the fact that Shintoism does not make the idol is very close to the religion of Israel. This kind or religion is very rare in the world.

In the Greek mythodogy, they make various idols after the images of gods. They make the idols of Zeus, Artemis, and Aphrodite. Hinduism of India has a

plenty of idols.

But, the Japanese Shintoism does not make idols of god or gods from the ancient past. When I said this, someone asked me, "In the shrine, there are a pair of guardian dogs that look like lions at the gate of the shrine. Are not they idols?"

But the believers of Shintoism do not think of them as gods. They are merely guardians of the shrine.

In the ancient Israel, too, the Bible says that there were images relief of lions in the Temple of Jerusalem. But, they were not idols for the same reason.

The pair of dogs are simply the guardians of the shrine. They do not worship them.

Here, too, it can be seen that the Shinto Shrine is similar to the ancient Temple of Israel.

What is important is that we relearn from the Japanese tradition and culture and history and seriously pray how best to spread the Gospel to the Japanese in that context.

### Why the revival took place among Messianic Jews

Many of us belong to Protestantism. But, Protestantism originally branched out from Catholicism. Theologically, it inherited 70~80% from Catholicism.

Since there was numerous movements such as "return to the Bible" and "return to the teaching of the Apostolic church," there is tendency to return to the original point. But, since it came out of the Catholic Church it still has Catholic influence to this day.

Protestantism, though it is not as much as Catholicism it is still Western Christianity.

Recently, there are many people who convert to Christianity. They are called Messianic Jews.

For the past 2000 years, there were few Jews who became Christian. However, there are increasing number of them are becoming Christians in the past 10 years. Why is this happening?

The reason can be seen in the theology of Messianic Jews. Their theology is different from that of Catholicism or Protestantism.

The difference is that they look squarely at the "Jewish nature of Christianity." Christianity was born in Judea and Jesus Christ was a Jew.

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You may think nothing of it, but they have given proper re-thinking from the Jewish point of view.

Their theology is called "Messianic Judaism." "Judaism" means that it is a Jewish religion. Also, "Messianic" means that they believe Jesus as the Messiah.

They regard themselves not as Christians but rather as the "Jews who believe Jesus as the Messiah."

Since they believe in Jesus they are Christians; but they call themselves the "Judaists" and the "Judaists who believe Jesus as the Messiah."

Thinking this way has a very important implication for them. Because, believing Jesus as the Messiah they know that they are establishing their Jewish identity.

That is to say that becoming a believer does not abandon being a Jew. Rather, it will establish their identity as a Jew.

This way of thinking is now leading many Jews to Jesus Christ. And the number of Messianic believers (the Jews who believe Jesus Christ as the Messiah) is rapidly growing.

In this way, the theology of Messianic Judaism values the Jewish tradition and is trying to revive the Jewish nature in true sense of the word. So, they jealously observe Jewish festivals and values highly the laws of the Old Testaments.

In Catholic and Protestant theology, they unconsciously transformed Jewish Christianity to Roman Christianity. For this reason, the Jew regarded Christianity something "pagan," stumbled on it, and they could not approach Christianity.

But, now Messianic Judaism is leading many Jews to Jesus Christ.

### What happened in Judea can happen in Japan

How about Japan?

In Christianity up till now, when Japanese become a Christian didn't he give you an impression that he abandoned being Japanese?

But, Messianic Jews (Jews who believe in Jesus Christ as the Messiah) believes that having faith in Jesus Christ does not mean for them to stop being Jews but to become true Jews.

They believe only Christianity can complete the Jewish tradition. When they believed this thought and faith, flames of revival spread among them.

The same can be said about Japan.

Becoming a Christian is not to cease being a Japanese. Rather, it means for a person to become a true Japanese-like Japanese. Isn't important to think that only Christianity can purify, complete, and fulfill the Japanese tradition?

Of course, Judea and Japan have many differences. Messianic Judaism cannot be applied unchanged to the Japanese. Just as Messianic Judaism was disclosed among the Messianic Jews, we need to have Christianity disclosed to the Japanese themselves.

It is important not to import the western Christianity unaltered, but for the Japanese to directly digest the pure teaching of the Bible, then spread Christianity in Japan.

The Jew often say that the Japanese mentality (spirituality) is similar to that of the Jew.

Even today, don't many Japanese Christians feel like believing some foreign God when they become Christians in Japan? They must feel like it; and non-believers also think so.

But, the truth is different from it. To become a Christian believing in Jesus Christ is to sublimate, raise, and establish the Japanese tradition to this day for the Japanese. It is to establish the nature of the Japanese in true sense of the word.

Recently, I truly feel that it was good that I became a Christian as Japanese in this Japan. There is a world only Japanese Christian can open it.

For the Japanese to become a Christian does not mean to deny the Japanese tradition. Rather, it will revive, enhance, purify, and complete it.

Japan is the country that is Judaic like no other country in the world. There are many similarities between Japan and Judea. What happened in Judea can also take place in Japan.

If our prayers are focused on it, surely the Lord shall perform the great work.

## REGIONAL INTERCESSORY PRAYER MEETINGS

### 1. HOKKAIDO

Sapporo: Sapporo Grace Kirisuto Kyokai,  
Rev. John H. Minagawa  
Sapporo Grace Christ Church  
3-27 Nishi 5chome Kita 32jo Kitaku  
Sapporo 001-0032  
Tel 011-717-1801

### 2. IWATE-KEN

Mizusawa: The Revival•Tohoku House of Prayer,  
Mr. Noriaki Takahashi  
Restaurant Praise, 26 Naka-machi, Mizusawa-shi, 023-6813  
3rd Sun. 7:00 a.m., Tel 0134-62-3561

### 3. SAITAMA-KEN

Warabi: Warabi Intercessory Prayer Meeting, c/o Sagitani  
Minami-cho, Warabi-shi, 335-0003  
One Holiday, Every Month, 2:00 p.m., Tel 0484-42-0967

### 4. TOKYO-TO

Tokyo: (1) Tokyo Central Intercessory Prayer Meeting,  
Waseda Hohshien Seminar House (2-3-1 Nishi  
Waseda, Shinjuku-ku), Contact Rev. John H. Minagawa,  
6-1-17 Kamitsuruma, Sagamihara-shi, 228-0802,  
Tel 0427-47-5703, Fax 0427-46-2119  
3rd Mon. 6:30-9:00 p.m.  
Kirisutokyo Fujin Kyofu Kaikan, B1 (2-23-5 Hyakunin-cho,  
Shinjuku-ku),  
Contact Mrs. Moto Yamaura, King's Garden, Shuno Sono,  
612 Shimo-Kosaka, Kawagoe-shi, Saitama-ken 350-0812,  
Tel 0492-34-7049, Fax 0429-31-5552  
1st and 3rd Mon. 6:30 p.m.

### 5. KANAGAWA-KEN

Yokohama-shi: The Bible and Tea Meeting, Ms. Hisako Yoshida  
8-9 Mankigahara, Asahi-ku, Yokohama-shi, 241-0836  
Tel 045-363-5657, Every Friday, 2:00 p.m.

Sagamihara: Sagami-ono Kirisuto Kyokai, Rev. John H. Minagawa  
6-1-17 Kamitsuruma, Sagamihara-shi, 228-0802  
Tel 0427-47-5703, Fax 0427-46-2119  
3rd Wed. 7:15 p.m., 3rd Thu. 10:15 a.m.

### 6. NAGANO-KEN

Chiisagata-gun: Maruko-machi Kirisuto Kyokai, Rev. Rieko Matsuyoshi

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1710-1, Kami Maruko Kawahara, Maruko-machi,  
Chiisagata-gun, Nagano-ken, 386-0404  
3rd Wed. 7:30 p.m., Tel 02684-2-5264

## 7. SHIZUOKA-KEN

Shizuoka: Living Way Church, Richard Gordon 4-6-16-7  
Kamiashigara

Shizuoka-shi, 420-0841  
1st Sun. 2:00 p.m., Tel 054-248-4058

## 8. KYOTO-FU

Kyoto: Kyoto Prayer Group, Sister Eva F. Cereghino  
5th floor, Catholic Kaikan, Kawahara-machi, 3 jo-agaru,  
Nakakyo-ku, Kyoto-shi, 604-8006  
Every Tue. 7:00 p.m. (ENGLISH), Tel 075-241-3867

## 9. OSAKA-FU

Neyagawa: Hinode Kirisuto Kyokai, Rev. Chitose Takimoto  
26-9 Nakakida-cho, Neyagawa-shi, 572-0835  
3rd Thur. 2:00 p.m. Tel&Fax 0720-22-9232

## 10. HYOGO-KEN

Takasago: Takasago Kyokai, Rev. Masaaki Tezuka  
1-34 Kamicho Arai-machi, Takasago-shi, 676-0015  
4th Wed. 9:30 p.m.-12:00 a.m. Tel&Fax 0794-42-4854

## 11. FUKUOKA-KEN

Fukuoka: Fukuoka Shinsei Kirisuto Kyokai, Rev. Hiroshi Takeda  
3-33-1 Miyake, Minami-ku, Fukuoka-shi, 815-1344  
2nd Wed. 7:30 p.m., Tel 092-561-4232

Ito Kirisuto Kyokai, Rev. Tokuji Tomono

12-4-1 Imajuku Ijiri, Nishi-ku, Fukuoka-shi, 819-0197  
3rd Wed. 7:30 p.m., Tel 092-807-9080, Fax 092-807-2298

## 12. OHITA-KEN

Beppu: Full Gospel Iesu Kirisuto Kyokai, Rev. Seiji Nagano  
10-1 Noguchi Moto-machi, Beppu-shi, 879-0933  
Tel & Fax 0977-26-3692  
e-mail:fg-jesus@poppy.ocn.ne.jp  
Fri. 7:30 p.m.

## 13. OKINAWA-KEN

Naha-shi: Hosana Kirisuto Dendosho, Rev. Shinshu Kase  
9-6, 2-chome, Wakasa, Naha-shi, 900-0031  
Sat. 6:00 p.m., Tel 098-868-5641

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## Focus of our Prayer for October 2001

### (1) Pending Subjects for Prayer

1. Let's pray that the influence of the Souka Gakkai, a cult group, on Japanese politics be quickly diminished.

[Editorial]

\* In the Upper House election of July, the Komei-to obtained 8,190,000 votes and fell short of their original goal of surpassing 10,000,0000 votes in the proportional representation.

2. Let's pray that the Emperor will be saved and abundantly blessed by the Lord Jesus Christ and the blessings will spread over the entire Japanese people. Also, pray that the Emperor's presence among the peoples of the world will be used as the foundation of blessings. And pray that the Japanese people understand and respect the Emperor as the leader and work toward the world peace.

[Editorial]

\*According to a non-fiction writer Miyoko Kudo's "McArthur Tales" (July 15, 22, August 5 issues of Nihon Keizai Shimbun), the Showa Emperor relied heavily on Gen. McArthur and he appeared to be greatly influenced by McArthur's strong wish and passion to make Japan a Christian nation. Furthermore, he was moved by imperial lectures on the Bible by Mrs. Vynning and Rev. Tamaki Uemura, who taught Crown Prince, to the extent the Showa Emperor seriously considered becoming a Christian. If it was impossible to do so while he was the emperor, he even considered abdicating the throne. However, those surrounding the emperor were alarmed and opposed the move. Also, having believed the false information that the number of Japanese Christians reached 20 million due to distribution of 10 million Bibles and increased missionaries, Gen. McArthur reported the same to the US Department of Army. Journalist, John Gunther, who visited Japan in June 1950, predicted that "since there is no doubt that many Japanese are still Shintoists, for this reform to be successful it will take many years."

3. Let's pray that the Christian Church and the Jews, Catholics, Protestants, Pentecostals, and various denominations and churches that criticize and feud against each other repent and reconcile with one another.

[Editorial]

\*Ecumenism (World Church Unification Movement) seeks the unity that contains diversity within, we would like to continue praying for the unity by the Holy Spirit, though we currently have many difficulties now.

4. That the Japanese, by becoming a Christian, does not deny the Japanese tradition but sever to revive, enhance, purify, and complete it.

[Editorial]

\*Please read the report by Rev. Kubo, "Concept of Redemption that existed in Japan."

5. That the works of the Markorsh Mission will progress. Since the number of subscribers of the Revival Shimbun has reached 2,700, let us pray that it will increase to 5,000. Also, pray that the contents of the Revival Shimbun to further fullness.

6. That the journalists who engage in TV, radio, newspaper, and magazine will cease arrogant

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and prejudiced reporting and news gatherings; and they will fear God and return to fair reporting of the news. Let's pray that those who are aware of such problems will raise their voice in protest and ask for retraction, and for them to play a role of the watchdog.

7. Let's pray that the tendency to have a smaller number of children, that will destroy the country, to stop, and the policy that will encourage having a larger number of children according to the will of God will be practiced with blessings of the entire society.

"God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase, fill the earth and subdue it.'"

Genesis 1:28

[Editorial]

\*France during 1930~40, England and Germany in 1970s suffered from political confusion, deterioration of moral, low birth rate and aging of the society. But, the emergence of able leaders such as De Gaul and Thatcher helped the nations with revived national consciousness and gave the perspective of the future vision. They gradually came out of the crises and birth rate increased; their society was revived from lethargy. Japan's birth rate increased slightly (1.34~1.35) from the previous year in the fiscal year 2000, but we need to have the bright future vision for Japan for the further increase.

## (2) Timely Prayer Subjects

1. That the Koizumi cabinet, in fear of God, will not set the wrong course for Japan, they will govern in such way that will contribute to the world peace while they securely maintain the Japanese independence.

[Editorial]

\*So far Prime Minister Koizumi keeps repeating the mantra, "we shall carry out the structural reform. We expect the people to bear the pain," but he did not present any concrete plan. But, after the impressive victory at the Upper House election, he should tell us clearly the concrete plan of the reform and what the pains constitute of, and show clearly how we can bear it in overcoming it and the bright future vision of Japan to the people.

2. Let's pray for that the Christian church is protected from the right wing movement and the left wing movement and keeps standing on the basic of the evangelical faith.

[Editorial]

\* Protestant churches that had been divided into many denominations gathered together on the Day of Harvest 1940 at Aoyama Gakuin University sang the National Anthem, celebrated the national fortune and the Greater Asian Co-prosperity Sphere, pledged dissolution of denominations and evangelization of the Asian continent by the "Japanese Christianity." In 1941 the "United Church of Japan" was formerly established consolidating 35 denominations and pledged support for completion of the sacred war effort. This was the experience of the Japanese Christian church of the right wing movement in the past.

However, the defeat of 1945 triggered the repentance of the Japanese church of its right wing tendency, and shifted greatly to the left. The United Church of Christ in Japan issued the "Confession on War Responsibility" in 1966. The United Church of Christ in Japan was put on so called the "social" line such as anti-emperor system, anti-Yasukuni Shrine, anti-capitalism, anti-Narita Airport construction, anti-buraku

discrimination by the church executives that belong to Chukaku-ha sect. This influenced the Church of Japan, the Reformed Church, the Baptist Church, etc., the Kirisuto Shimbun, the Christian Shimbun. Japanese Christians should realize the fact, while they intend to bear responsibility being witnesses of love, good will, and justice, they are unwittingly being drawn into the world network of the new communism lead by Gorbachev.

【Refer to the Sawada Paper】

3. “Holy Spirit Renewal Congress” (Rev. Masaaki Tezuka, Executive Director) was established within the United Church of Christ in Japan would help others to correctly understand the charismatic movement within the Church.

[Editorial]

\*The National Conference was held on July 20<sup>th</sup> with about 200 people participating. We are thankful for the meaningful and exciting meeting. The Presbyterian Church of Taiwan (Executive Director, Rev. Toshiaki Ko) that was the engine of the past Taiwan independence movement allied itself with the United Church of Christ in Japan, but this was a political alliance. Since then, the Holy Spirit Renewal Congress (Chairman, Toshiaki Ko; Vice Chairman, 彭德實) was established within the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, and they joined the Holy Spirit Renewal Congress of Japan. One can say that this is indeed a meaningful spiritual alliance.

4. That one more committee member that have the strong sense of calling to be added to the Intercessors for Japan.

5. That the donation of eggs and surrogate birthing do not become legalized.

[Editorial]

\*The Reproductive Assistance Medical Committee of the Ministry of Health and Welfare and Labor, regarding the surrogate birthing by a third party for the infertile couple, accepted the Special Committee Report of last December that bans the practice nationwide, and decided not to change the existing policy on August 15. From now on, the legislations to punish doctors who performed the surrogate birthing and the middleman will be made (Refer to the August 16 morning edition of the Asahi Shimbun). While this problem involves the complexity of the parent-child relationship and the undue psychological pressure for those who were asked to donate eggs, it is a great problem of man stepping into the God’s territory and might violate the dignity of life.

6. That good textbooks that values the Japanese tradition will be selected at Japanese schools.

[Editorial]

\*The processes to select and approve the textbooks that will be used for the next four years starting next spring at elementary and middle schools, blind-deaf schools, schools for the disabled were finished by August 15 nationwide. Even though the selection of textbooks this time was supposed to be done under the leadership of the Educational Committee rather than under the leadership of the Teachers Union, pressure and obstruction of the forces that want to prevent the selection of “New History Textbook,” and “New Citizens’ Textbook” of Fuso-sha were awful. As the result, all public schools both municipal and national did not select the textbooks of Fuso-sha.

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Four schools for the disabled, one deaf school, and eight private schools chose the textbook of Fusso-sha. Against the left leaning history textbooks of the past, the emergence of the new textbooks that tend to value the Japanese tradition was a great challenge. Since the textbooks of Fusso-sha are criticized by the both right and left wings, we hope that better studied new textbooks will emerge four years later. At any rate, it is interesting to see that more than 500,000 copies of the textbooks of Fusso-sha were sold after they began to sell.

7. That the Koizumi Structural Reform will show its true effectiveness, and the new industries that have the serious international competitiveness. Also, in the midst of the pains associated with the industrial structural transformation such as expected slow down of the economy, the increase of unemployment, that the strong spiritual thirst for the true God will be awakened in the Japanese, through revival the Japanese will have the strong spirit and vision that never give up hope in the Lord. In this way, that the real power of Japanese economy will be used greatly for the world mission of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

[Editorial]

\*The Upper House Election ended in convincing victory of Jimin-to as expected by many. Now, it is necessary for Prime Minister Koizumi display his powerful leadership to reap the fruit of resolute structural reform. The structural reform is in short to fundamentally change the flow of money from the industrial sectors <construction, distribution, real estate, etc.> that are not producing due to the high cost structure but using up the nation's money: national budget (public works), financial investment fund (postal savings and postal insurance through the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications) and the private loan <bank, insurance, investment trust, industrial annuity, etc.> to the new industries that have future and internationally competitive. The significance of this is comparable to the "Industrial Structural Revolution" and the transformation that will bring about would be like that of the energy revolution that shifted from coal to oil and the Industrial Revolution of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In order to accomplish this feat, the government needs to clean the deficit items: disposal of non performing loans that means calling bank loans from private industries, resulting in possible large scale bankruptcy and unemployment. While stopping the unconditional public financing by the reform of corporations having a special status, etc., the forward looking policy to create the new industries: the enhanced budget for 2002, the assistance in retraining of labor, and decisive rationalization of social insurance cost must be pursued. These reforms will impact adversely on household consumption in a short run, but unless we do the national budget will break down. They are pursuing two policies: there is nothing we can do until the economy improves, and trying to lessen the pains of the reform at the same time. This is indeed a balancing act, but God will bless the economic policy and its management, let us pray that he will help us for it can be used for the Kingdom of the Lord.

8. Let us pray that we can totally mobilize the brains of Japan to reconstruct the nation. Also, pray that Japanese Christian churches can nurture true patriots who are in Christ and the rich who do not resort to self-advertisement and self-interest but dedicate their financial resources to God and the country.

9. That the Japanese government will not hand former Peruvian President Fujimori and his brother-in-law, Mr. Aritomi to the Peruvian government.

[Editorial]

\*Against the Japanese government that firmly rejects handing over Mr. Fujimori and Mr. Aritomi, the Peruvian government is keeping a hard position in order to find a lead in favorably negotiate to obtain economic assistance from Japan. (July 31, Morning Edition, the Sankei Shimbun)

10. For the peace of Israel. Psalm 125:5

[Editorial]

\*One sided reporting on the Middle East by the world's mass media is taking place for more than 10 years. The scenario is that Israel attacks Arab unilaterally and persecute them. In spite of the fact that in reality Israel is responding to thrown stones, shootings, bombing terrorism from the PLO Arafat side who ordered Intifada, the world mass media are favoring Arabs in their reporting. Let's pray for the fair reporting.

\*That, with the intervention of God, the virtual war condition to end soon and it will not develop into the Middle East War.

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## 《FINANCIAL REPORT》 (JUN. 1~JUL. 31, 2001)

(Unit = Yen)

INCOME	AMOUNT	EXPENSES	AMOUNT
Offering	52,610	Travel	29,120
		Printing	0
		Materials	16,485
		Postage	26,530
		Office Expenses	1,100
		Bank Charge	400
		Telephone	6,372
SUB TOTAL	52,610	SUB TOTAL	80,007
Brought Forward	51,244	Balance Carried Forward	23,847
National Activities Fund, Income	0	National Activities Fund, Expense	0
B.F.	15,700	C.F.	15,700
International Conference Fund	0	International Conference Fund	0
B.F.	35,474	C.F.	35,474
TOTAL	155,028	TOTAL	155,028

## 【Names of Contributors】

Takasago Christ Church (Hyogo)	1	Tetsuhiro Kawata (Hyogo)	
Hinode Christ Church (Osaka)	1		1
Sagami-Ono Christ Church (Kanagawa)	2	Hidenobu Ideta (Kumamoto)	1
Sapporo Grace Christ Church (Hokkaido)	2	Anonymous (Tochigi)	1
Setsuyo Sato (Kanagawa)	1		

## 【Editor's Note】

\* We deliver the October issue of the Newsletter. The feature article is by Rev. Arimasa Kubo, Executive Director of the Remnant Publication.

\* "Concept of redemption that existed in Japan" teaches us that Japanese consciousness of sin and the concept of defilement are two yet they are one and the same.

\* After the WWII, "Chrysanthemum and Sword" by Ruth Benedict, American cultural anthropologist, was published and translated into Japanese. It was rated highly and influenced many people at that time. One of her point was her view of seeing that the "Japanese culture is the culture of shame; the western culture is the culture of sin." Since the Japanese culture has little influence of Christianity, the Japanese has a stronger sense of shame than sin. But since the Westerner has Christian influence he has a stronger sense of sin. So, she develops her comparative analysis. Even though I was in my twenties, I recall thinking the author of this book

does not understand what lies beneath the Japanese culture.

\* Since I have a copy of Prof. Sawada's paper, "Leftist Leaning Tendency of the Catholic Church," those who wish to read the entire paper please ask for it at my attention at the executive office.

\* One of our committee members, Rev. Kazuto Yukizawa was promoted to Associated Minister of the Hinode Christ Church and also Professor of Law Department at the Kobe University. Much is expected for his activities.

By John H. Minagawa

