

Kyoshu-sama's Message
Meishu-sama's Birthday Service
Twin Messe Shizuoka, Japan
December 23, 2018

Congratulations, everyone, on Meishu-sama's Birthday Service!

As you all know, each one of us has a birthday on this earth. But why were we born on earth and who were we to become? I would like you to know: we were born on earth to become a child of God, a Messiah. We did not come into this world only to die away.

Why did God start the work of creation and why does He continue to carry it out? It is because God is our true Father and He wishes to welcome us back to His heaven, grant us eternal life and live with us in His heaven, with His very own children.

Who responded to this will and wish of God? Meishu-sama did. He was awakened to the will of the heavenly Father, served in it and showed us how we, his followers, could also live our life according to the will of God.

As I always say, a year before he passed away, Meishu-sama collapsed from a brain stroke. And while the pain of the stroke persisted, on the 5th of June, 1954, he summoned 500 of his leading ministers to his residence in Atami, *Hekiun-so*, and announced that "Messiah was born."

At the time, Meishu-sama emphasized that it was not a reincarnation or rebirth but a new birth. He also said that him being born anew was a "fact," which even he was surprised by, and that it was "a miracle beyond a miracle."

Meishu-sama always teaches us the importance of actual facts and miracles. He tries to wake us up through them so that we can know God. It is this Meishu-sama who told us that being born anew as a Messiah was a fact and that it was a miracle beyond a miracle. What else could this mean except that he wanted us to acknowledge that him being born anew was not something imaginary or unreal but a definite and concrete fact – a fact we must not only believe in but also accomplish ourselves as his followers. It is recorded that Meishu-sama looked very happy and joyful when he made the above announcement.

Now, we have long believed – with quite a conviction – that being born anew as a Messiah was something only Meishu-sama was able to achieve. But is that so? Is that really so? Today, I say to you that it is definitely not so! For us, Meishu-sama is the true pioneer who became the very first example to show us that we can also serve in the work that he served in. Each one of us, without exception, can be a child of God. This had been decided in heaven well before we came to the earth! We all can experience the joy and happiness of serving God, just as Meishu-sama experienced when he served God. In fact, Meishu-sama is still serving God who ceaselessly

tries to have us be newly born as His children.

Just like us, Meishu-sama was born on this earth as a child of humans; he was born to physical parents. Being a child of humans, Meishu-sama was the sum total of his numerous ancestors, as each one of us is. He lived his life receiving various influences from his ancestors. Once he entered the life of faith, he wrote many teachings and hymns, taught us the practices of Johrei, Nature Farming and Art, constructed sacred grounds and left many life examples for us to follow. Through all of these, Meishu-sama tried to awaken us to the fact that God lives and works within each one of us always and that the love of God and God's heaven do exist within us. With all his body and soul, Meishu-sama devoted his life to the spiritual path so that we can come to know the true God. And what was the very last thing God showed to us through Meishu-sama? It was for Meishu-sama to be born anew as a child of God – a Messiah.

To tell you the truth, a long time ago, God made ready this path so that all humans can become His children. Before beginning His work of creation and sending us to the earth, God prepared heaven and achieved everything in this heaven that was needed for us to eventually become His children. In heaven, He bore numerous spiritual children who were one body with Him and gave the name of Messiah to each one of them, to each one of us! Knowing that His children would later rebel against Him and sin, God, in heaven, completed the work of atoning, purifying, saving and reviving us. It was only after that God actually began the work of creating the whole universe and then sent His spiritual children to the earth. That is how each one of us possesses the name of Messiah within us. That is how we have heaven and everything that was accomplished in it within us. God's forgiveness and salvation, His love and will – they are all within us. The path to be revived and be born anew is already firmly established within us!

God created our consciousness – our sense of "I" – so that we could walk this path of becoming God's true children. God is always communicating with us and talking to us through our consciousnesses. In order to respond to God, I believe there is a need for us to consciously turn our hearts to Him all the time. And remember, without our consciousnesses, without our sense of self, we cannot exercise our free will and turn our hearts to God. Without it, we cannot recognize our ignorance in forgetting who our true Father is. Without it, we cannot repent, return to heaven and express our desire to receive God's forgiveness embedded in the name of Messiah. It is through our consciousnesses that we can serve in God's work of making all humanity be born once more and making them His children named Messiah.

The third hymn for today's service reads as follows:

I am not even worthy to be numbered among Your servants.

But I plead for Your mercy, God:

Include me in Your work!

No matter how minor and insignificant a role You assign me,

I am happy just to be able to play a part in Your work!

Meishu-sama is saying that he himself is not worthy to be numbered as God's servant and is asking God to include him in the divine work. How about us? We are the same, are we not? Or are we too proud and haughty and are assuming that we are already counted as followers of God and Meishu-sama? We forgot where we came from! We were lost and did not know where our true home was! That being so, how could God count us? How could we be His servants? Yes, we are the same as Meishu-sama. Of course, we are not worthy to be numbered among His servants. But thank God and His unfailing love! He made us encounter Meishu-sama and let us know where our true home is and who we must become. We can now live in hope, believing that one day we, too, can be born anew as God's children and be numbered among His servants!

With this hope firmly engraved in our hearts and with Meishu-sama leading us, let us serve God with perseverance and persistence. Let us serve in the divine work of making all things new and creating a bright future, no matter what kind of role God assigns to us!