

Greeting by Masaaki-sama
Meeting with Members
Sydney Johrei Centre, Sydney, Australia
December 1, 2018

Good afternoon!

I am very grateful that Rev. Horacio invited me to come to Australia. As you know, the situation in Japan is very difficult, but the staff present here today stood up for Kyoshu-sama, and Rev. Horacio did the same. For me personally, too, it was quite a tough year.

This past September, I went to Germany. In Japan, I am meeting a lot of members who stood up for Kyoshu-sama, but it was so nice to see many members who did the same in Europe. Actually, they are in a more difficult situation because they don't have Su no Hikari Kyodan for support like we do in Japan. They really had to leave their own churches, continue their faith at their homes, meet with their friends. And now, today, I am here in Australia having this opportunity to meet with all of you. It is going to be a short stay, but I would like to listen to you, and also share my feelings and my thoughts. I am really looking forward to interacting with you. I don't want this opportunity to be a one-time event, rather, I would like to come back as much as possible and deepen our faith together.

This leaflet, as Rev. Horacio just said, was made because we knew we were going to Germany, which is a Christian country. Kyoshu-sama said that if we are to talk about Messiah, we cannot escape from thinking about or understanding who Jesus Christ is. In Christianity, Jesus is believed to be the Messiah, but in our church, we say that Meishu-sama is the Messiah. Kyoshu-sama and I have talked about this and we believe that we should clearly say what we think is the true meaning of the word Messiah – what Meishu-sama wanted us to know through the word Messiah.

I think the question we should be asking is who is Meishu-sama for us? Maybe we think he is the creator of Johrei. He taught us Johrei, Nature Farming, Natural Food and Art – but for a very long time, we didn't really focus on the last achievement of his life. He announced that he was born anew as the Messiah just before he passed away. I think that many followers, after Meishu-sama died, thought that if we really got this message out to the world, we were going to be in conflict with Christianity because we were going to say that Meishu-sama is the Messiah. Then who is Jesus Christ? We avoided asking that very

question. Who truly is Meishu-sama? Who is Jesus Christ for us?

Kyoshu-sama has been guiding us for a very long time that what Meishu-sama achieved in his life was not limited only to himself. Meishu-sama was a great person, a great saint, and he founded Johrei. He did flower arrangements himself and did Nature Farming himself. But I think what was special about him was that he didn't limit those kinds of activities to himself. He let all the members do Johrei, Nature Farming, Art and all the other practices that he actually practiced himself. Meishu-sama was very clear about that point. He wanted to share what he was taught by God to his members. There was a love in Meishu-sama. He was not holding on to the things that God gave to him. It was this Meishu-sama who said that he was born anew as the Messiah in 1954.

I think if we are truly followers of Meishu-sama, we have to follow Meishu-sama one hundred percent. Until now, I think we have been picking and choosing which parts we would like to follow. "I like this art part so I will follow Meishu-sama through this part only or I like Nature Farming. I will practice and follow Meishu-sama through Nature Farming." These are all fine, but I think the most important thing to think about is where are we going? Where is our final destination? Meishu-sama was destined to become a child of God – Messiah. Are we also destined to become a child of God? Or are we destined to just end our life as a human child? I think the fact that Meishu-sama left us that teaching, the message that he was born anew as the Messiah, is the greatest message he wanted us to receive.

When we think of him, we know he emphasized that he is the Light from the East. He was born on the eastern edge of the world. If Japan was the center of the world, maybe New York would be the farthest east. But when Meishu-sama was born, London, England was the center, and on that world map, he was born in the Far East, in Japan. I think there is a symbolic significance to this fact. The fact that he was born at the edge of the whole world, the edge of humanity means that what he received is what all humanity received. I believe the message that Meishu-sama is trying to teach us is not limited only to the Japanese. I think this message is meant to be for the whole world. I think the fact that he emphasized he is the Light from the East means that what he achieved is also what each one of us has to achieve.

In Germany, we talked about Messiah and I heard about someone who became a

member of our church but her mother wasn't able to accept the fact that Meishu-sama was the Messiah. That was because, with their Christian background, she believed that Jesus Christ was the only Messiah. And so the member lived her life with that conflict for years, thinking, "Who really is the Messiah – is it Jesus Christ or Meishu-sama?" She didn't know how to communicate to her mother she believed in Meishu-sama when her mother believed in Jesus Christ as the Messiah. But when she heard the message in this leaflet, she was really happy and asked me whether she could tell her mother. Her mother was happy, too, because she felt something special about Meishu-sama but didn't know what it was.

I believe that followers of Meishu-sama who also want to believe in Jesus Christ don't need to compete against Jesus Christ anymore when we put out the name Messiah. I'm not sure whether many people are ready to accept the message that each one of us, within us, carry the spirit named Messiah, but I believe in this truth. I believe in what Meishu-sama achieved, and I believe there are some people in Christianity who are also ready for this message. This is because in Christianity, they believe in Jesus Christ crucified; they believe in the atonement of sin. They received forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ, and I think they believe that salvation stopped there. I believe they don't know about the next step: Who are we going to become? Meishu-sama showed us the next step of who we have to become. I believe the life of Meishu-sama was the example for all of us to follow, but not only for us. The life of Meishu-sama is an example for all humanity.

I believe that for us to awaken to the soul of Messiah within, is what Meishu-sama wanted us to spread to the world, and I think that essence is in this leaflet. I believe that Meishu-sama's will, Meishu-sama's wishes, Meishu-sama's messages are all in this leaflet. This is not something you can force on someone, because *God* is asking each one of us the question, "Do you want to be my child and receive the name of Messiah?" You have to answer this by yourself.

It was in Japan that many people stood up but they were not forced to. They chose by their own will. I think it is a good opportunity for us to think whether we really want to receive the name of Messiah within, whether we really want to say to God, "I want to be your child and I want to receive the name of Messiah." I think that is exactly what happened in Japan. People separated – those who said "no" to that question didn't accept the name and those who said "yes" stood up for Kyoshu-sama, believing that what Kyoshu-sama is

teaching is the true will of Meishu-sama.

This is not only happening in Japan, but members around the world are now being asked this very question. Whether we go to the altar tonight and how we answer is up to each one of us. I try to say “yes” to that very question every day when I stand in front of the altar. I truly believe that Meishu-sama is behind us, Kyoshu-sama is behind us, God is behind us and Jesus Christ is behind us as well. If you are willing to say “yes” to that very question, then I think you are ready to accept this new leaflet and spread to the people around you and to the Australian people. Thank you very much.