

## God's Fingerprints in Japan II

### What is the name of God in Japanese context

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Since 2003, Dr. Daniel Kikawa and his team have studied Japanese Christianity. As an American of Japanese parentage, he has struggled within three cultural contexts. His ancestors were not native Hawaiians or Americans, but Japanese. His life has been a journey to seek the meaning of life and his identity as a follower of Jesus. His struggle and efforts have brought a drastic change in Hawaiian Christian society. Dr. Kikawa used the hula dance as liturgy within worship services. At one time, Hula dance was prohibited by Christian missionaries because of its erotic movement. However, hula itself is originally a prayer to God. There is no contradiction and it is even an appropriate way to express one's gratitude to God. The discovery of the name of an indigenous god, *'Io*, was the other crucial point for Hawaiians. *'Io* was identified and accepted as a creator god. Through several reformations within the church, it seems many Hawaiians have accepted Christianity.

On the other hand, Japan is still not a Christian society. The first DVD: "God's Fingerprints in Japan" challenged Japanese Christian and Shinto schools of thought. Shinto was thought to be an obstacle for Christianity. It is true that some Christian groups attacked Shinto shrines as places where evil spirits live. However, we must first examine the nature of Shinto. Just as Christianity has many denominations, the same is true for Shinto. There must be also some "heresy" or "paganism" in Shinto. But this

would not be like Christian history; Shinto has never created or discriminated before the creation of "State Shinto." One of the differences between Shinto and Christianity is theology. As Shinto had, at first, no theology, there was no conflict. Shinto accepted other philosophies or religions, such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. This makes it difficult to identify what is the exact essence of Shinto.

One critic mentioned that Shinto is like a "Dish." Another critic said Shinto wears different kinds of clothing. Most importantly, "*matsuri*" (festival) shows gratitude toward nature or the gods which give people their harvest. In that sense, Shinto originally reminds me Cain or Abel in Genesis in the Bible. Their way of serving God was initially to give thanks to God for first fruits of the harvest.

The attempt of Dr. Daniel Kikawa, in the first DVD, is the assumption that the first deity, *Amenominaka-nushi*, who appears at the beginning of "Kojiki" is the same deity as the Creator God. The second DVD is to assist the first one with the help of Japanese scholars. Dr. Nakanishi, a well known scholar of traditional literature, agreed in his interview that *Amenominakanushi* must have had an influence of Christianity.

This paper will record an original version of the subtitles of the second DVD as written documents. All statistics are from Gallup Poll 2006. At the end, part of the Abe genealogy is added as an appendix.

## God's Fingerprints in Japan (subtitle)

We live in a critical time for Japanese society. It is a time of great insecurity, a time of transition when the ideas and methods of the past 50 years are in doubt, people are searching for a new direction for the future and an identity as a people. It is a time when 64% of adults and 85% of teenagers wonder why they exist; a time when one fourth of Japanese seldom feel happy. Job security has disappeared and pressures at work and at school are at an all time high. This is a time when 36% of teenagers wish they were someone else and 11% wish they were never born. In times like these, thoughts turn to spiritual things and finding true meaning in life.

Many Japanese have found true meaning in Christianity, as a majority of people in Western nations have. Of Japanese who say they have a religion, 12% of adults and 36% of teens say they are Christians; being a Christian is no longer strange in Japan. And yet, 69% of adults say they do not know enough about Christianity to make a decision about it. Information about Christianity is confusing and many cults claiming to be Christian bring more confusion.

Is Christianity a strange foreign religion, brought by westerners who have an agenda to dominate Japan? Or is it part of the creator God's plan for all people including the Japanese? This is a presentation of historical evidence and personal experiences that seeks to find answers to these questions.

The Bible states that there is one Creator God. 24%, nearly one fourth of Japanese adults, also believe there is a supreme creator over all of the universe. Believing in a creator is not strange in Japan. Many scholars throughout Japanese history have pointed to the god *Amenominakanushi*, The God in the Glorious Center of Heaven, as the creator god.

The respected Japanese scholar, Hirata Atsutane (1776 - 1843) wrote, "...we understand that he (*Amenominakanushi*) has sovereignty over all the

things in the universe. Since this great *kami* thus exists without a beginning, it is only appropriate that he be called the ultimate, first deity, and that no words should possibly exist to describe the heights and depths of his virtuous power."

Genchi Kato, D, Litt., life member of the Meiji Japan Society, receiver of the Purple Ribbon (the highest honor for a Japanese scholar), for his merits in the scholarly study of Shinto said, "We have good reasons to believe, from the standpoint of a comparative study of religion that *Ame-no-Minakanushi-no-kami* is really the Deity of Japanese primitive monotheism ...*Ame-no-Minakanushi-no-kami* is the Divine Lord of the Very Center of Heaven, judging from the very signification of the name. How lofty a designation of the Deity!" ( from the book, "A Study of Shinto")

However, there are also notable scholars in Japanese history who believed that he is not the creator god. The purpose of this film is not to settle this debate, scholars have argued about this issue throughout Japanese history and will probably continue to do so. When it comes to spiritual and not physical things, there is no such thing as indisputable proof. In these situations, each one must rely on their *Chokkan* (direct feeling) to decide what they believe. One thing is clear however, that from the very beginning of recorded Japanese history, the notion of a creator God has been a part of Japanese culture and religious thought.

A creator God being a part of Japanese religious thought is to be expected. Ancient belief in a creator god is found all over the world. After finding much evidence during his research on ancient and primitive cultures, the famous anthropologist Andrew Lang proposed his theory of "Primitive Monotheism," that, opposed to evolutionary thought, ancient and primitive peoples began with a belief in one creator God. This ancient monotheism was later degraded into the worship of many gods. Following on this research, Dr. Wilhelm Schmidt compiled 12 volumes of names

and descriptions of the creator god in ancient and primitive cultures around the world, confirming this theory. Since then, anthropologists and historians have found many thousands more ancient names for the creator around the world. Some names for the ancient creator God in other countries are *Hananim* (Korea), *Shang Di* (China), *Koro* (Ethiopia), *'Io* (Polynesia), *Tupan* (South America) and *Tirawa Atius* (North America).

Daniel: "We have seen much evidence that the idea of a creator god exists in Japan. People may ask, "If the Japanese knew of the Creator God, then why do we have 8 million *Kami* today?"

The Bible says in Romans 1:19-23 that, "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

The Bible says that the Japanese people like all people, had knowledge of the Creator God and then, like all people, fell away from that knowledge to worship man and beast and other created things.

Daniel: "If the Bible is true, then all names of the creator god around the world have been corrupted at one time or another. Even the name of *Yaweh* (the creator God of the Bible) went through a time of corruption. During the time of the ancient kings of Israel, he was very much like *Amenominakanushi*; he was the far off and forgotten god who had no hand in the affairs of the people of Israel.

The Hebrews, at one time, worshipped a pantheon of gods in the temple of Yahweh and on every hill instead. (2 Kings 23:4, 2 Kings 17:16-17, 1 Kings 11:5-7, Ezekiel 8:14) At *Mizpah*, the temples of Asherah (The goddess of sexual lust) and Yahweh were erected side by side and in the Jewish Elephantine community in Egypt, the Canaanite goddesses, *Anat-Yahu* (or *Anat-Bethel*), *Ashim-Bethel* and *Haram-Bethel* were assigned to Yahweh as consorts.

We should not throw out the precious legacy of the names of the creator, but restore them to their original purity.

The notion presented by our first film "God's Fingerprints in Japan" that *Amenominakanushi*, the God in the Glorious Center of Heaven, was the creator god has initiated a significant new revelation. A family of two generations of Christian pastors was watching "God's Fingerprints in Japan" when they received a shocking revelation. This family is a branch of the Abe clan, one of the founding families of Japan. They are in possession of a private Abe family genealogy scroll passed down in their family for many generations. In their research, their genealogy scroll is one of only four such genealogies that trace back to the misty beginnings of Japan. Their genealogy goes back for over forty generations, over 1000 years, to the priests of the first emperors of Japan before it enters a mythical age they do not know the length of. The scroll is written in ancient Japanese which is a hybrid of Japanese and ancient Chinese that this current generation of Abes could not read.

Mr. Abe's father was the sixth son in the family. Knowing that he would not inherit this precious family heirloom, he took 6 months to copy the original scroll, character by character. It was providence that he did because the original family scroll was later destroyed at Hiroshima. Therefore, this precious copy of the family heirloom is the only one left for the Abe family. When the Abes came to Christ, they were told that the Japanese never knew the Creator God, that

they only knew the 8 million *kami*. Yet, they believed that Jesus died on the cross for their mistakes and accepted him, eventually becoming two generations of pastors. Imagine their shock when they watched “God’s Fingerprints in Japan” and found that the very same God that many Japanese scholars called the Creator was also at the very top of their secret family genealogy scroll! The name of *Amenominakanushi* was followed by a creation account that they could not read.

In great excitement, the Abes went to their friend, Dr. Joseph Ozawa, who had introduced the film to them to share what they had found. Dr. Ozawa, being also a friend of Dr. Daniel Kikawa, the lead producer of the film, brought the news to him. In early December of 2006 the Abe family met with Dr. Kikawa and his team for the first time and showed them the Abe genealogy which confirmed their work. It was at that time that they agreed make a second film to document this amazing find.

Dr. Kikawa asked Professor Uemura, who has studied the ancient Japanese, to translate the scroll with the help of his scholar mentors. Dr. Kikawa also contracted the University of Hawaii’s Japanese Studies Department to translate the scroll.

The Abe genealogy begins with the name of *Amenominakanusinokami*, followed by the creation account which says, “Heaven and Earth were not yet separated and chaos. It looked like an egg containing sprouts. The purer and clearer part was thinly drawn out, and formed Heaven, while the heavier and grosser element settled down and became Earth.

There were three elements that revealed themselves as *kami*, which was called *Kuninotokotachinokami*. It has the virtue of five elements and origin of one million and fifty thousands families. We call it *Amenominakanushinokami*.”

The creation account in the Abe genealogy seems to bring together the “Kojiki” and “Nihonshoki” by

showing that the name of *Amenominakanushi* and *Kuninotokotachinokami*, the first God mentioned in the “Nihonshoki” are both names for the same God! Thus showing a connection between *Amenominakanushi*, the god of creation in the “Kojiki” and, *Kuninotokotachinokami*, the first god mentioned in the “Nihonshoki”.

Daniel: “Having different names for the Creator God is not contradictory to the Bible. It is also very common around the world. The Bible mentions many names or titles for the creator God, for instance: *Elohim* (El - plural form), *El Elyon* (El Most High), *El Shaddai* (El Almighty), *Yaweh Yireh* (Yaweh provides), *Adonai* (Master), and many others.” As the Bible says in Romans 1:20 - 23, man worshipped one God and then fell into worshipping many gods. It is common for the many names for the one creator god to be corrupted until each name represents a separate god. The famous Egyptologists, Sir Wallis Budge and Sir Flinders Petrie, believed that this happened in Egypt. Other respected anthropologists have found this same evidence in Babylon, India, Polynesia, and every continent of the world.

Daniel: “The creation account in the Abe genealogy is evidence for the names or titles of the Creator God becoming different gods in Japan. It is also common for ancestors to become worshipped as gods, we find this all over the world. It is therefore, not strange that we find this in Japan.”

There are similar creation accounts in the “Kojiki” and “Nihonshoki” and around the world. The Bible says in Genesis 1:1-2, “In the beginning, *Elohim* (literally, the Gods - biblically this would mean the trinity) created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

This Chinese account says, “of old in the begin-

ning, there was the great chaos, without form and dark. The five elements had not begun to revolve, nor the sun and moon to shine. You, O Spiritual sovereign first divided the grosser parts from the purer. You made heaven. You made earth. You made man. All things with their reproducing power got their being.”

The Hopi (Native American) say that, in the beginning, there was only the Creator, *Taiowa*. All else was endless space. There was no beginning or end, no time, shape, or life. There was only an immeasurable void that had its beginning and ending, time, shape and life in the mind of *Taiowa*, the Creator.

A Hindu, *Brahminical* account of creation recorded in the *Analysis of the Code of Menu*, published in the *Asiatic Journal*, Nov. 1827, says: the universe existed only in darkness, imperceptible, undefinable, as if wholly immersed in sleep. The self-existing power, himself undiscerned, with five elements and other principles, appeared in glory, dispelling the gloom. He, whom the mind alone can perceive, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who exists from eternity, even he, the soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend, shone forth in person.’ Having willed to produce various beings from his own divine substance, first with a thought he created the waters; the waters are called *nara*, because they were the production of *Nara*, or the spirit of God; and since they were his first *ayana*, or place of motion, he thence is named *Narayana*, or moving on the waters.

Daniel: “For the Japanese to have a creation account similar to those found around the world is expected. This could possibly point to a common creation account in the past history of man as the Bible states.”

Perhaps the most important thing about the discovery of the Creator God, *Amenominakanushi*, The God in the Glorious Center of Heaven, in their own genealogy is that it flipped who the God of the Bible

was for the Abes. Immediately, their direct feeling was that the Creator God was no longer the strange Foreign God who dwelt in the West and never cared about the Japanese or had relationship with them. He became our Japanese God, who lovingly created us and cared for us from the beginning of Japanese history. The Bible says He has always cared for us, but we left him for the 8 million *kami*! It is we who left Him. He has never left Japan or the Japanese, but remains waiting for his beloved Japanese children to remember him and come home.

63% of adults believe one can follow Jesus and still be Japanese. Finding that the creator God of Japan is the same creator in the Bible confirms this. Our Japanese God continues to reach out to us like the father of the prodigal son in the Bible (Luke 11-32). In this story, a rebellious son takes his inheritance and leaves his father. After spending all of his inheritance and living on the streets, he realizes his error and says, “I would rather return home, apologize to my father and live as his servant than the way I am living now. He returns home, believing his father will be angry. But his father, seeing him a great way off, ran out to him, and hugged him and said to his servants, bring out the best robe, a ring and shoes for my son and let’s have a great feast and rejoice because my son was lost and now is found. This is how our Heavenly Father waits to greet us when we repent for leaving him and come home. He longs for his lost Japanese children and hopes that they will remember him. When he sees us coming from afar, he will not be angry, he will run out to meet us with tears of joy. He will put his robe upon us and prepares his best feast for us. For what has been lost, has now been found, safe in the house of our own loving Japanese God. He is saying to his Japanese children, ‘I cherish you! Please, Come Home.’”

## Appendix

From Genealogy of Abe Family  
Trial reading of Japanese

### 天之御中主神

Amenominakanusinokami

Ametsuchi imada wakarezu konntonntaru (koto) torinokono gotoku kumorite kizashi wo hukumu. Sono kiyoku younarumonowa tanabiite ame to nari omoku innarumonowa sizumite chitonaru. Sono naka (sanbutsu) ari nashite katachiwo arawashi kami to naru. Mou [gou] shite kuninotokotachinokami to shousu. Mizukara [onozukara] gogyou toku wo sonau. Hyakugoman kabane[sei]no taiso yorite tamenominakanushinokami to iu.

( ) ; not known, not found in Kojiki nor Nihonshoki

[ ] ; other possible reading

— ; my trial reading

### 天八下神

(amenoyakudarinokami)

Mizukara arawaremasu kami ni shite kuninotokotachinokami no zen wo ukete amensita wo osametamo.

### 天合神

amaainokami

### 天八百日神

(amenoyaohinokami)

### 天八十萬\_\_神

(amenoyaoyorozutamanokami)

### 高御皇産靈神

takamimusuhinokami

Kunshin wo michitatu rei wo tadasu

### 神御皇産靈神

kamimusuhinokami

### 神速魂命

kamuhayatamanomikoto

### 市千魂命

ichichitamanomikoto

### 興登魂命

(kotodamanomikoto)

Kunshinno rei hajimete sadamaru. Amaterasuo [mi] kami no chokuwohoujite matsurigoto wo toru. Kuni no mamori no sadamete motte okami no mikotonori wo tsutaete motte osamu. Kunitsukami okami no mikotonori wo ukemochi (nasa) n [mu].

### 天津児屋根命

amatsukoyanenomikoto

Amaterasuo [mi] kami no mikotonori wo houjite oshihomiminomikoto niniginomikoto hutayo wo hosashite maturigoto wo toru. Amaterasuo [mi] kami mata mikotonori wo kudashite shinri [himorogi] no sein wo tutae motte kaminomichi wo tukasadorashimu. Yorite nakatomi no enso tosu. Oudohosa koreyori hajimu. Kawachinokuni makioka ni chinza kasugadaimyojin korenari.

### 天\_\_雲命

(amenohayakumonomikoto)

Hukiaezunomikoto no mikotonori wo tatematsuru. Hyuuganokuni takachiho ni miyako (wo) itari hukiaezunomikoto wo hosa site matsurigoto wo toru.

### 天種子命

amenotanekonomikoto

Hyuganokuni kashiwabara yori jinmutenno ni senjyu tatematsurite yamatonokuni ni jinmutenno wo hosa matsurigoto wo toru.