

Japan Will Arise again from the Disasters

Sermon from the Spring *Higan* Memorial Service at the Toronto temple

March 27, 2011

When Magnitude 9.0 earthquake hit northeastern Japan, I was in Japan. I learned many things through the earthquake followed by tsunami and radiation leakage. I felt agony of not knowing what was going on and what would happen. I realized I was protected. I also learned what important supplies are to cope with disasters.

The first quake hit at 2:46 p.m. on Friday, 3/11. Fortunately I was at a hospital to visit my brother-in-law who had stroke and had a major brain surgery. Since I arrived too early for the visiting hour, I waited at lobby. It was hot with rays of the sun coming from the windows, so I took off a jacket but I felt cold soon and saw an ominous black cloud from the window; the building started to shake. There's no power, no telephone, no TV, nor radio. We did not know what was going on. Public announcement said there was an earthquake in Miyagi, and no power, please be calm." They did not know when the power would be restored. After climbing up stairways to 7th floor and visited the sick brother with my sister for over one hour, walked down again the long steps.

Since all commuter trains stopped, we took a taxi to go back to my sister's home. The streets were all packed with cars without traffic lights. When we arrived at her home, it was so dark and cold. We were isolated from outside worlds without communication – no radio, no TV, and no telephone. We started to worry about a niece's daughter where she was, what she was doing, and how she would come home and so forth.

I also thought about my family and friends in America and members in Las Vegas, but there was no way to contact. My sister finally found a portable radio but could not find batteries. After searching all over and took off batteries from clocks, we were able to know outside world, what was going on. Only thing I could do was to sleep. At 6 a.m. next morning, Douglas called me at her home and finally able to communicate from and to outside.

I believe these natural disasters were a warning for Japanese people to practice righteousness. It was a warning from gods of Japan. According to Japanese mythology, Izanagi and Isanami, were believed to have created the islands of Japan by dipping a jeweled spear into the sea as they stood on the Floating Bridge of Heaven.

In 13th Century Japan, Saint Nichiren, the founder of Nichiren Buddhism, wrote in *Rissho Ankoku Ron*, a petition to the Kamakura Government: “Reasons for the natural disasters like earthquake, the tidal waves, famine and disease were indication that something were not done right. God and saints have abandoned this country, and devils and heretics have created calamities. ... The peace of our country will be realized if the slanderers of the Right Law are eliminated and keepers of the Right Law are respected.”

Recently, majority of Japanese people lost value of Japanese culture and tradition. They don't honor their national flag; don't sing their national anthem at school. They become more self-centered and very materialistic. Some honest people in Japan worry and say that China may invade Japan like she did Tibet in 1959. Japanese people are too naïve for protect their own country. Japan depends on her security to U.S. Military, and they try to cut the security treaty

between two countries. Japanese seem to lose loyalty to their mother land. Former ambassador to Japan, Dr. Edwin Reischauer, said that United States sent 500,000 soldiers to Vietnam; America could not protect South Vietnam as long as the people in South Vietnam had no loyalty to protect their own country.

By the way in the return flight from Japan, I saw a movie, "Hereafter." It started with an American investigator on child labor happened to be at a public market where tsunami took over the towns of S.E. Asia some years ago. She was drawn and passed away. After she peeked into after-death world, she revived. She published a book about the after-death.

Knowing life after death is very important because you know what will happen and where we go after our death. So you will not feel agony even if death approaches to you sooner or later. Today we had a mass memorial service for our ancestors and also for the Victims of Eastern Japan earthquake and tsunami. We prayed for them to rest in peace. I pray for them every morning till the 49th day.

Although gods and saints seemed to be gone from Japan, if they follow the righteousness, deities will come back to Japan and protect them just like the divine wind blew at the time of Mongolian Invasion in 13th Century and economic development after the World War Second in last few centuries in Japan. Japan needs support from whole world. Nichiren Buddhist Order of North America requests your donation toward these tragedies.

Wake up Japan to practice the righteousness!

We must follow the righteousness, so that our deities and ancestors will protect us.