

【Yuka-sensei】

Everyone, thank you very much for joining us for the "Video Prayer Gathering" on September 26th. Thank you for being with us again today.

Rika-sensei, is there anything you would like to share?

【Rika-sensei】

It's autumn, isn't it? Today it was chilly even in long sleeves, and when I went out for a walk, I thought, "It's already autumn."

Yesterday was the Harvest Moon, and since it was cloudy we couldn't really see the moon. But what is interesting is that even though it was the Harvest Moon, the (actual) full moon is tomorrow.

I spent yesterday thinking how truly lovely it is, this Japanese heart that can look at a moon that is not full and find it beautiful.

On this day, today, midway between that Harvest Moon and the full moon, through this prayer we can go on bringing to fullness something like the beauty of what is incomplete. I thought such a day was lovely, and I have been looking forward to connecting with all of you today.

【Yuka-sensei】

Lovely, lovely—truly lovely. Today's talk is also on the theme of "God and Human Beings," so... oh, I'm sorry, I broke off in the middle there.

What I had truly been thinking about—and this takes me back to the talk of beauty—is that it has now been just about two months since the earthquake in Kumamoto, and I have heard that a new typhoon is now heading toward Okinawa, and also that heavy rain is forecast in both Chiba and Aichi.

Truly, right now, while there are people working on the recovery and on all kinds of situations, I was thinking that this too connects with today's theme. But even so, gazing at the beauty of the moon that Rika-sensei spoke of—its beauty, whether it is waning or full—I would like us to go forward with the main program today as well.

<Yuka-sensei's explanation in English>

【Yuka-sensei】

And so, everyone, thank you again for being with us today. Now then, let us begin first with prayer.

<Prayer for World Peace>

【Yuka-sensei】

Now then, let us move into the main program.

【Rika-sensei】

Today, too, I would like to begin with a reading of a Dharma talk by Goi-sensei. It is from "Religious Questions and Answers, Sequel," which I have read from before as well. This book truly gathers together questions from so many different perspectives, and the way Goi-sensei answers each of those many questions is something that resonates very deeply.

What I will read today is the answer to the question on page 53: "If human beings are children of

God, and God is perfect and complete, why did evil and misfortune arise in this world? Please teach me as fully and as simply as possible."

Here I would like all of you, too, to feel into this and think about it for a moment. We are divine; we are children of God; we are God itself; we are light itself. And yet, why is there suffering? Why is there sorrow? Why is there illness?

I will now take about a minute of quiet time, so I would like us to face this question—"Why is that?"—and then to have a time of gently embracing your own answer: "My answer is this," "This is what I think."

Each of you is a child of God, a divine offshoot spirit of God; you are light itself, divinity itself. And yet, why are suffering and sorrow and loneliness, fighting, conflict, and opposition occurring before our eyes?

<Rika-sensei's explanation in English>

[Rika-sensei]

Now then, let us read how Goi-sensei answers this.

It is a little long, so please relax. While holding your own answer—not comparing it with the answer you arrived at—I would simply like you to listen to how Goi-sensei answers this.

<Reading of Goi-sensei's "Religious Questions and Answers, Sequel," Question 101>

Question 101: If human beings are children of God, and God is perfect and complete, why did evil and misfortune arise in this world? Please teach me as fully and as simply as possible.

Answer: This is a question I have been asked time and again, but since it is an extremely serious and fundamental one, let me answer it once more, as fully as I can. Because this question has not been made clear, there are a considerable number of people who have let their precious religious feeling become clouded and have turned into materialists. There is also the question, "If God is great love and the Absolute, why does He not promptly set right the unhappiness of humanity?" This is a question of the same nature, so I will answer it as well, together with this one.

When I look at the state of this world, it is truly filled with evil and misfortune. For the sake of their own interests, people push aside and shun even their parents and siblings, and even hold grudges against them and envy them. And in relations between peoples and between nations as well, there are many cases in which, in order to protect their own people and their own country, they act in ways that leave no room to consider the losses of other peoples or other countries.

Those who regard such conditions as the real human being hold that human nature is evil, and advocate the doctrine that human nature is evil. In the thought of this world, the doctrine that human nature is good and the doctrine that human nature is evil have been in contention since ancient times, and both doctrines have something that one can agree with. If you ask which doctrine I hold, it is of course the doctrine that human nature is good—and moreover a thoroughgoing doctrine of the goodness of human nature, that is, the doctrine that human beings are children of God. There seem to be various ways of teaching that human beings are children of God, but from beginning to

end I recognize that human nature is good, and I regard every evil and every misfortune as a fading-away form. It is what is called a philosophy of light, through and through. Among other religious teachers there are some who, having gone so far as to teach that human beings are children of God, perfect and complete, then in the very next breath seize upon the evil in the human heart, and blame and judge the heart of the human being, who should be a child of God, saying, "Your heart is wrong. You have fallen ill or become unhappy as a shadow of your own heart, so you must correct your heart." But such a child-of-God doctrine, such a philosophy of light, is half-hearted: at one moment the human being becomes a child of God, and at another a child of evil, until one no longer knows whether the human being is really a child of God or a child of evil; and in the end the human being becomes a child of mixed good and evil, a child with the two natures of God and the devil. However much such a teaching may preach, on the one hand, that there is no evil, there is no misfortune, there is no devil, if it acknowledges sin, misfortune, and evil as belonging to the human heart and teaches in a psychoanalytic way, "Because your heart is wrong, the other person becomes wrong," then it is acknowledging evil and misfortune in the heart of the human being, who should be a child of God, and the general public can no longer tell clearly which is the truth. When one teaches in that way, it follows that there is evil within God; God is then no longer perfect and complete, nor goodness itself; and the hearts of the believers become unable to keep on forever in the radiance of eternal life, in a state of mind that is clear and cloudless through and through.

Whatever anyone may say, it is beyond doubt that God is perfect and complete in nature and that the human being is a child of God; and in the human being who is a child of God there is no evil, no misfortune, no illness—neither a bad heart nor a mistaken heart, nor even the dark shadow called the shadow of the heart. All of that is a fading-away form; it is like the shavings that are gradually carved away from the unfinished portions so that the human being, as a child of God, may reveal its true form in this world.

As I have said before, this is like sculpture: as the sculpted figure of the child of God is completed, chips of various shapes scatter about all around. Since people have taken those chips as their object, blaming and judging others and blaming and judging themselves—saying, "Your heart is this bad," or "My heart is this ugly"—the way religion has been up to today has been incomplete as a philosophy of light, and it cannot be said to have taught the true way of life of the human being as a child of God.

However, in actual daily life, in society, or in international affairs, these chip-like evil thoughts and evil deeds hinder good thoughts and good deeds in every way, and it even appears as though good deeds and good thoughts are about to be defeated. That is surely why everyone wants to ask the question posed at the outset.

Here I must take my answer one step further.

I do not teach that the human being is the physical human being alone. The physical human being, I say, is only a very small part of the human being, who is eternal life. I do not know this truth as knowledge; I know it through spiritual perception, and I am savoring it as actual experience. And so I keep thinking at all times that the human being is a fascinating thing, a wondrous thing. I believe there are quite a few people, not only myself, who know of such experiences directly or indirectly. "Eternal life" is not merely a philosophical term; it is a phrase used in the world of human beings as something true.

If the human being were to end as a physical human being alone, then God could not be perfect and complete, nor could the human being be a child of God. One could not object if it were said that God is imperfect and is striving to become perfect while fighting against the devil; and it would follow that God created human beings and thereafter bears no responsibility whatsoever, with the responsibility laid upon human beings alone. The human being would then be a mere creature of God, and the salvation of humanity would be forever impossible. Why? Because in ordinary people, as physical human beings, the instinct of self-preservation is dominant, and they act just as animals do, bringing others down in order to protect themselves; and so human society, which is always relative in terms of gain and loss, would be forever placed upon a battlefield.

Therefore, as long as we go forward with the view of life and the view of the world held up to today, this earthly world will eventually be destroyed, and so the perfection of God and the child-of-God nature of the human being would no longer be true. That is why the view of life and the view of the world held up to today must be completely turned around. By turning it around I do not mean overturning the truth; I mean correcting the thoughts and actions of the people of the Earth, who, as Shakyamuni said, are caught in upside-down delusion, into true thoughts and actions.

The view of life and the view of the world up to today have been upside-down thoughts and actions. In what way were they upside down? In that they regarded the true human being and the true world as nonexistent, and took as real the physical body, which appears merely as an instrument and an expression of the true human being; and in that, likewise, they have assumed the world of form, which is the place where the true world is expressed, to be the real world.

So long as the truth is not recognized as the truth in this way, the question arises: "If the human being is a child of God and God is perfect and complete, why is there evil and misfortune in this world?"

A religious thought that does not deny the perfection and completeness of God, and yet holds that devils and evil people exist as realities, is inevitably a half-hearted thought: it means thinking of good and evil, God and the devil, as set against each other, so that the waves of opposition and conflict in the human world will never disappear—and so it amounts to disrespect toward the perfection of God. Yet even among religious teachers of considerable standing, this point seems to have become blurred without their realizing it.

There are religious teachers who, while thinking of God and the devil as opposed to each other, hold the view that even though the surrounding countries all have armaments, Japan alone must not have them. This too is a half-hearted way of thinking. If one is to hold the view that Japan should not have armaments, then those people must regard the existence of devils and evil within their own hearts entirely as fading-away forms, and must take their stand in the absolute position that God alone is the one existence in the universe.

And conversely, there are religious teachers who proclaim the perfection and completeness of God, acknowledging neither devils nor evil, and yet who acknowledge an enemy that will invade their own country and advocate having armaments. These too must be called religious teachers in whom a clear religious thought has not been established.

I perceive the human being as the embodiment of eternal life; I am convinced of the perfection and completeness of God; and I have realized in my very being the truth that human beings are children of God. Therefore I see all the devilish acts and unhappy states that appear in this world as a single change arising in the process by which human beings reveal the form of God in this earthly world—as forms and acts that, once they appear, fade away just as they are. And as for the individual human being, I emphasize that forms such as evil and misfortune appear as a process of training, so that one's own life may bring forth its capabilities as a child of God just as it is, in whatever environment; that evil and misfortune do not actually exist there as they are; and that when one comes to know the truth, that evil and misfortune immediately fade away and vanish.

Therefore, as long as a person grasps evil, misfortune, and illness as realities and will not let go of them, evil, misfortune, and illness will probably never leave that person; but for the person who sees evil, misfortune, and illness as fading-away forms and puts them completely, just as they are, into the heart of God, such negative forms disappear from that very moment.

The evil and misfortune of this world spoken of in the question do not disappear as long as a person's thoughts are grasping such waves, and they vanish from the person who has cast such waves into the heart of God. So this problem is resolved according to whether or not that person truly leaps into the heart of God. It is not a problem of theory; it is a problem whose answer emerges in actual practice.

This is not a problem for individuals alone; it is a problem whose answer emerges in the same way between nations and among all of humanity.

That is why, in order to have many people recognize the answer to this problem as actual experience through the simplest of acts, I recommend to all of you the teaching of the fading-away form and the practice of the Prayer for World Peace.

However elaborate and ingenious a theory one may develop concerning such religious problems, if that theory is difficult to put into practice in actual life, it will not spread among the general public. Something the general public cannot do greatly lowers its value as a religion for the present age. Today we have come to an age in which a few great people alone can do nothing, and so I feel keenly the need for the power of the general public.

My Prayer for World Peace is a method for realizing world peace that can be understood by a few outstanding people, and that the general public, too, can easily understand and make their own. As you pray this Prayer for World Peace, before you know it the true self of the human being is unfolded, and the eternity of the individual life and its connection with the life of the universe come to be realized without your knowing it; and while the anxieties of daily life fade away, the work of extinguishing the karmic thoughts of the world's humanity is being accomplished.

The true self is unfolded, and one comes to understand the eternity of the individual life—that is, the truth that the human being never dies, but goes on living in various layers of existence; that all is guided by the loving and compassionate heart of God; and that such a thing as evil does not truly exist.

For that, it is essential to believe in the existence of the Guardian Deities and Spirits,

who protect each human being and guide human destiny. And it is essential to engrave upon one's heart, and to give thanks for, the fact that a great assembly of such Guardian Deities and Spirits, as the Great Light of Salvation, is shining out over the people and the nations who pray for world peace, and is fulfilling a great role in the realization of heaven on earth.

Thank you very much.

Through Goi-sensei's words, "evil does not exist" and "life knows only how to shine," I have been given renewed conviction. Thank you. Now then, Yuka-sensei, I would be glad if you would share with us.

【Yuka-sensei】

Yes. Rika-sensei, thank you so very much for always seeking out such truly wonderful writings of Goi-sensei and reading them to us.

What I thought when I received this writing this time is that, of course, we understand Goi-sensei's fading-away form and the Prayer for World Peace as knowledge.

But in today's writing too, I was once again made to feel, very, very deeply, the part where Goi-sensei says, "I do not know this truth as knowledge; I know it through spiritual perception, and I am savoring it as actual experience." That is exactly why there are moments when I am struck and think, "Yes, that's so."

This time, for example, in the very first part, there is resentment and envy even among parents and siblings, and between peoples and in international relations, too, all sorts of things are done to protect one's own country. And then, just after that, at the words "Those who regard such conditions as the real human being," I was struck once again: "That's it—Goi-sensei does not see these phenomena as the form of the real human being."

I was struck by the difference between understanding something as knowledge and the words written by someone who knows it through actual experience.

That is exactly why Goi-sensei holds a thoroughgoing doctrine of the goodness of human nature, the doctrine that human beings are children of God. In short, evil, misfortune, and illness, a bad heart and a mistaken heart, and even the shadow called the shadow of the heart, are all fading-away forms and not the form of the real human being. I felt softly enveloped by these words, which could come only from Goi-sensei, who sees nothing but that.

That connects so strongly with what Rika-sensei spoke of at the very beginning. When the moon wanes more and more, I think it is truly mistaken to see that waning state, or the cause of its waning, as evil, or as something not good, or as something to fear, or to feel that we must protect ourselves from it.

The question is whether we can receive this: "No, no—the moon is perfect and complete; it is always perfectly round. It may appear to wane depending on phenomena and circumstances, but that is not its real form."

As Rika-sensei says, whatever its waning state, it is beautiful. It is a process of becoming perfectly round again—that connects with this so strongly.

Because Goi-sensei firmly knows and physically senses the laws of the universe, however the moon may appear, he would say, "Nothing is missing at all; nothing has changed. Rather, the moon just as it is, is perfect just as it is; it is only a fading-away form, due to phenomena and circumstances."

It connected so strongly with what Rika-sensei said.

We can understand the feelings of religious teachers who see this world as real, and of people who think about protecting their country, can't we? "Of course one ends up that way"—I think that is truly the natural human reaction in the very moment the moon wanes. But here Goi-sensei, as a spiritually awakened person, truly sees and understands things on an entirely different dimension.

Entrusting to God, leaving everything to God—I felt that, whether the moon wanes or is full, if only we understand the magnificence of the laws of the universe, we can reach the place of knowing, "The moon (humanity) is perfect."

And then, as Rika-sensei says, even if situations and phenomena appear to be waning, precisely because we can keep seeing eternal life—or rather, the perfect form of the moon—it was a time in which, within the Prayer for World Peace, I was deeply, deeply immersed in the state of mind in which we can say, as Rika-sensei did, "Every moon is beautiful," and in the sense of "That is how unreal this is." Thank you very much.

And so, since we have this opportunity today, I wanted to ask Rika-sensei, too, why she chose this passage, but she says that is not necessary, and as time is limited, I would like us to recite "How Man Should Reveal His Inner Self" here.

Having read the answer Goi-sensei gave to "Why is there evil?"—and to what Rika-sensei asked us at the beginning, "If we are originally children of God, why does this happen?"—I would like us to recite "How Man Should Reveal His Inner Self" once again.

Yes, then let us read it.

<Yuka-sensei's explanation in English>

<Recitation of "How Man Should Reveal His Inner Self">

【Yuka-sensei】

Yes, thank you very much, everyone.

Next, I would like us to pray the Prayer for World Peace—a quiet time—right here within this resonance and its lingering echo, and I would like to ask Rika-sensei to lead it.

【Rika-sensei】

Yes. Reading aloud is truly tremendously powerful. As the one who is allowed to read, I feel Goi-sensei's resonance directly, and right now I feel within myself a vibration and resonance completely different from what I felt before reading.

I would like to read once more just the last part, about how wonderful Goi-sensei's Prayer for World Peace is, and then I would like you to pray at your own pace.

"May Peace Prevail on Earth." "May peace be in Japan." "May our missions be accomplished." "Thank you, Guardian Spirits." "Thank you, Guardian Deities." While offering gratitude to these Guardian Deities and Spirits who are always guiding us, I would like each of you, wherever you are, to pray this great prayer, "May Peace Prevail on Earth"—this resonance of our very being, of life itself.

"As you pray this Prayer for World Peace, before you know it the true self of the human being is unfolded, and the eternity of the individual life and its connection with the life of the universe come to be realized without your knowing it; and while the anxieties of daily life fade away, the work of

extinguishing the karmic thoughts of the world's humanity is being accomplished."

To believe in the existence of the Guardian Deities and Spirits, who protect each human being and guide human destiny. And to offer gratitude to our Guardian Spirits and Guardian Deities. A great assembly of such Guardian Deities and Spirits, as the Great Light of Salvation, is shining out over the people and the nations who pray for world peace, and is fulfilling a great role in the realization of heaven on earth.

What kind of work are this Prayer for World Peace that we pray every day, and this heart of gratitude toward the Guardian Deities and Spirits, doing for us? It is the unfolding of the true self; and it has the work of raising the various fading-away forms that appear as evil to a higher dimension, digesting them, and elevating them. I would like us to pray this together with all of you.

<Prayer for World Peace>

【Rika-sensei】

Thank you very much. Now then, let us form the Divine Spark IN Mudra. Yuka-sensei, please.

【Yuka-sensei】

Yes. Now we will form the Divine Spark IN Mudra seven times together, so, everyone, thank you for joining us.

<The Divine Spark IN Mudra, seven times>

【Yuka-sensei】

Yes, thank you very much. Now then, next, I would like to share a few brief announcements from Byakko Shinkou Kai.

<Announcements>

【Yuka-sensei】

Yes, and so, Rika-sensei, today's "Video Prayer Gathering" was wonderful again, wasn't it?

【Rika-sensei】

Reading Goi-sensei's writing was wonderful. Recently, when I was talking with someone, we were speaking about how creation arises precisely because there are two opposing workings.

When I wondered why there are experiences, human experiences, evil and suffering, I thought: if light is perfect and complete, and God is God, then creation is not light alone. When we pass through what we are able to experience—not evil, but darkness, or inner conflict—and return to the light, we return to a light that is more certain, more resolved, a light that has come through experience, than the light in its original place.

It is not substance, it is not reality—reality is light alone—and yet, when I thought that through this experience we can go on to become light that has created still further, I saw that everything is a working to be grateful for; reading Goi-sensei's writing today, it all connected for me once again. I'm sorry—that one thought just came to me there.

【Yuka-sensei】

Of course, we are all light itself, but there may be times when a human being experiences darkness and remains in the darkness. Yet in my experience, the light of a person who shines after experiencing that darkness has an indescribable sacredness beyond the original light. It really is the

experience that makes light all the more light. I think the light of such people is truly beautiful.

The people I deeply respect and admire—the more I hear their stories, the more I find that many of them have gone through quite difficult experiences. That, too, is all one, and it is truly nothing but a process for seeing the form of God. Listening to Rika-sensei just now, I thought that if we do not cling to that, then an even greater light will truly shine as light.

So, everyone, I think it is all right to go through this experience—these experiences, this experience in the physical body—with peace of mind.

Yes, and so, thank you all very much again today.

That is all.