

“What Liberation Theology is?” May 2nd(A), 9th(B), 16th(C), 2021.

Kobe International Christ Church May 2nd, 2021.

Pastor Iwamura Yoshio

Theme Scripture: 1 Corinthians 7:20

“Each person should remain in the situation they were in when God called them.” *New International Version*

“Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.” *King James Bible*

“So don't try to change what you were when God chose you.” *Contemporary English Version*

ἕκαστος ἐν τῇ κλήσει ἣ ἐκλήθη, ἐν ταύτῃ μενέτω.

hekastos en te klesei he eklethe en taute meneto

<Introduction>

Regarding the Palestinian issue, I wrote as follows.¹ God is not the one to despise about terrorism in Palestine and the Middle east. Politicians and leaders that brought war tragedies are not willing to provide education, medical support and welfare to the Palestinian people even in the crisis of COVID-19. It been over 70 years. The merciless religious people that have become just prayers to those people must be *metanoia* (repented). “Ruthless” is from the Greek word ἄστοργος *astorgous* <derived from στοργή *storge* and means lacking natural love, no love, ruthless> (Romans 1:31, 2Ti 3:3). Not only politicians, officials, economic leaders, scholars, and media, but also religious people are all seen by the publics as “ignorance, dishonesty, heatless and ruthless”. Where does the salvation of people who are in need due to wars, earthquakes, tsunamis, etc. come from? As a result of having traveled through religions, the sight that had gradually started to seen on the horizon was horrifying darkness. People are almost choked since having a feeling of no way to get out from the long tunnel anymore. An invisible coronavirus epidemic leaking from a nearby medical facility. How shall we live with your neighbors who are struggling to go crazy on meaningless countermeasures?

From this morning, through 3 weeks, I do like to share my “slave” guts with you all. If you feel uncomfortable, you can always leave here. What have made me to keep continuing even after being crushed many times like a cockroach? This is a proof that I started to see the existence of God. I have lived a stubborn life. No matter how much people hate me, I still keep living with a bad breath. I am going to talk about “Liberation Theology” from “slave”.

¹ 2021. Y, Iwamura. *Is it right to be indifferent to tragedy in the Palestine?* Erasmus Institute of Peace Studies.

【宗教者こそが平和への先導役】

京都市左京区の国立京都国際会館で8月26日から4日間にわたって第8回世界宗教者平和会議(World Conference of Religions for Peace: WCRP: 1970年の第1回京都世界大会以来、世界各地で約5年毎に開催)が開かれました。世界100カ国・地域から約2000人の仏教、キリスト教、イスラム教、ヒンドゥー教などの宗教指導者が集まりました。当初、2004年ごろに、ニューヨークで開催する予定でした。9・11テロとその後のアフガニスタン、イラク戦争により中断していました。「宗教間の紛争がなく安全な都市」(関係者)として、発祥の地京都に集うことになりました。開会式には、来賓として小泉首相も出席。他に、サイド・ムハンマド・ハタミ(イラン・イスラム共和国前大統領)、アン・ヴェネマン(ユニセフ事務局長)、エル・ハッサン・ビン・タラール(ヨルダン王国王子、WCRP国際実務議長)、ケル・マニエ・ボンデヴィク(ノルウェー王国前首相)などもメッセージを語りました。「暴力に対抗し共通の安全保障を促進する(Confronting Violence and Advancing Shared Security)」が会期中のテーマでした。米国の元大統領の入国をかたくなに拒んでいました。本会が26日、27日にハタミ師がイスラム教徒が平和と安全と推進に対して役割を果たすべきだとスピーチしました。米当局は29日、手のひらを返したように急遽ハタミ師の入国ビザを発給しました。中東諸国からの有力参加者により、議論はおのずと政治的な問題についても、特に非公式なセッションでかなり踏み込んだものが展開されました。たとえば、イラクで対立するスンニ派やシーア派のイスラム教指導者ら

10数人が「スンニ派であれシーア派であれ、一般の人が殺される状況は受け入れられません。あらゆる差別を捨て、すべての宗教、すべての人類、人間性を尊ぶ」と、シーア派宗教大臣のサイド・サレ・アルハイダリさんが代表して和平を呼び掛ける共同声明を発表しました。

イスラム教の聖職者は会期中、一貫して、テロを非難し、イラクには外部からの非宗教者の部隊が残虐なテロ活動を起こしていると述べました。最終日の29日、「宗教が暴力の正当化に利用されており、さまざまな宗教は協力して戦争や貧困、教育などの問題解決に尽力する」とする「京都宣言」を採択し閉幕しました。

世界各地で人類が直面している紛争、飢餓、貧困、AIDSやHIVの問題は、実際に宗教者が解決のため取り組んでいる実例をあげながら論じ合いました。問題は覇権主義や政治家の野心によって宗教が利用されている現実を直視し、宗教者が国境、言語、個々の正義を乗り越えて、連帯することによって、和平に向かおうとする祈りと行動が展開しました。イスラム教とユダヤ教の最高位も他者の痛みを共有し、女性や子どもたちに災いが及ばないように同じ思いでいることを分かち合いました。マスクミに名前を出せない中東の最高責任者たちも多く出席したからこそ、実りの多い国際会議だったと思います。

(岩村義雄記)



Can organized religion protect orphans in conflict, single women who have lost their husbands, and elderly people living alone?
(My manuscript, “KBH New Letter”. August, 2021. 2)

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(1) Cast off from the theology of escape

a. Choice of Theology

All theological concepts can be interpreted in two meanings. The use of words and concepts determine the truth of the words, and the practice determines the theory.

In Nepal, Dalit (scheduled castes) who appears in the “Vishnu Code (around 100-300 AD)” as the lowest class in Hindu society as “human being who make you impurity if you touch”, “people in struggling”, “people who are oppressed”, are the untouchable class people. They live with polishing shoes, collecting scraps and cutting hair on the street. There some convert to Buddhism or Christianity in order to escape the Hindu caste system. In order to be free from the oppression of the “religious” hierarchy, they change their religion like the volleyball court. However, even if they change their sect, they realize that the hope they had was an illusion since a religious organization still has “indifferent” feeling toward the lowest people.

As a third Roman Catholic generation, I was baptized as an infant at the Church of St. Ignatius. I completely ignored my studies, and playing around the fields. I tried to seek in the Unification Movement, the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Jehovah's Witnesses as if there is truth because of my desire from inside. I had been in the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania for 13 years, and I was convinced that the Millenarianism was the purpose of God to free human beings. I can go to paradise, and I don't need anything anymore because my sins have been forgiven. All of my family is also healthy. However, I got tired to connive at the reality that there are people who are moaning in relatives, neighbors and the world.

Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, my sense has been sharpened regarding the relief from the grief, suffering, and sadness of others that cannot be completed by self-help. By only the kingdom of God that the church says, and Buddhism preaching that of releasing from “*shyo-rou-byo-shi* (生老病死: birth, aging, sickness, and death), *ai-betsu-ri-ku* (愛別離苦: the suffering of departing from one's loved ones), *on-zou-e-ku* (怨憎会苦: the suffering of meeting up with persons one hates), *gu-fu-toku-ku* (求不得苦: the suffering of not getting what we want), and *go-un-jyou-ku* (五蘊盛苦: the suffering of getting attached to the five elements of self), we are urged to be “heatless” towards discrimination from hierarchy society toward natural disaster affected people and victims of terrorism.

b. Religion that prefers hierarchy

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar [1891-1956] was born in the Dalit family. He was a great influential person that he converted to Buddhism with a large group of people, about 500,000, even two months before his death. Any religion becomes a discriminatory one when the power of system and the “*ki* (貴: noble people)” and religion are linked. On the other hand, when you stand on the side of the “*sen* (賤: lowly people)”, even if it is the same scripture, doctrine, or teaching, it becomes a religion that resists. What clear to say that whether a religious believer has emotional peace to which side in the *kisen* (貴賤) paradigm would be a drainage divide. It can be said to be a turning point to choose whether the Liberation theology or Oppressive theology. The emperor is the center of Japan's medieval society. And there court noble families were around him. Ancient Israel was also similar, the high priest was on the center. And the Pharisees were around him. That structure is the same for Christianity on the Mediterranean coast. There is a Pope in the center. And he is surrounded by the archbishop, bishop, and priest. A hierarchy called “the laity” was formed which cannot be found in the Bible, and the traditional religious elite empire was established. Jesus Christ created the New Jerusalem and made the new commandments. He encouraged to talk as a people of the “new commandment” as, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35). However, if you follow the historical path, love was a bond only within certain fellowships. The Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant Church, and the Evangelicals have kept their hierarchies by decorations such as majestic synagogue style, attracted liturgy to people, and religious leaders with fine titles. The liturgy of the Christian school is an obvious testament of its traces. That is the sacred area where “*kawaramono* (河原者: discriminated people)”, “*eta* (穢多: lower dirty people)” and “*kojiki* (乞食: beggar)” cannot enter.

c. “*Sei* (聖: Holy)” and “*Zoku* (俗: Mundaneness)”

The people Jesus met were ὄχλος *ochlos* (crowd) in Greek word. It is Ochlos (Hebrew עַם הָאָרֶץ *am*

hartz <people of the land. People of the earth>)². “News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them.” (Matthew 4:24) Ochlos are those who cannot engage in production, those who are ill, those with intellectual and physical disabilities, and those who have been displaced from their homelands. In other words, they were out-cast, “abandoned people” and just beg to walk. They were discriminated people who have always been discriminated by the Pharisees and traditional religions. They were people who were defined as “sinners”, “dirty”, and “have no common sense”. Ochlos who lives on the periphery away from the center of power and authorities are the existence that have no relation with “holy city”. Once upon a time, Jerusalem was also the city of the pure Israelites. The high priests, aristocrats, and scholars of the law occupied the privileged class around the holy temple in Jerusalem. Jerusalem, the religious center for Jews, was the omphalos of the world, the symbol of Shechinah where God stays, and the holy temple. Jesus was executed on the Calvary where is the outside of the holy city. He ended his life on the wasteland on the earth where “dirty”, “isolated”, “non-human”, “leper”, and “poor people” exist.

Is the “cleric” a follower of Jesus? For example, can a person with intellectual disabled person, who is Ochlos, become a “cleric”? Unfortunately, they cannot receive a qualification for the teacher exam, which is an external vocation. In the 3rd and 4th centuries, a system was established on the Mediterranean coast that only “cleric” could give preaching the “Bible” in the “a holy temple”. Only holy ones can be “cleric” of “Christianity (Christianismos). “*Zoku* (俗: Mundaneness)” cannot take a seat of clerical profession. Since Ochlos is “*Zoku* (俗: Mundaneness)”, so they cannot enter the “holy sanctuary”. “Christianity”, which cannot be found in the Bible, has become exclusive and has “escaped” to the “church” for 1,500 years, and has been fascinated to the traditions such as “holy temple”, “holy hymn” and holy prayer that don't exist in the Bible.

(2) The protocanonical books is still in vigor today. Since the Bible has the liberation of the poor and the oppressed.

a. Truth that pervades in the protocanonical books, not religious theology.

I had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Hans Küng at the 8th Religions for Peace that had continued for 4 days from August 26, 2012³. In 2008, I reunited with my friend Mr. Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim (the Syriac Orthodox Archbishop of Aleppo), and he gave me a deep impression with his generosity towards Islam. I was awakened to his different opinion from the intolerant organized religion⁴. Also, I heard from the attendees about the suggestion of unity within “Islamic leaders of both Sunni and Shiite that conflict each other in Iraq”. It meant that the wrong truth was exposed those religious sect conflicts were under the great country’s intended control. Religious sects are used as a tool for political purpose⁵.

² The Pharisees had a sense of superiority, “But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them.” (John 7:49)

am hartz are people who are illiterate, not knowing the law and not following the law of purification.

1993. T. Kuribayashi. *Theology of the Crown of thorns*. Shinkyō Publishing. 254-255.

³ Hans Küng [1928-2021], a Roman Catholic theologian who denied the papal infallibility, so he was stripped of his *Mishio Canonica* [L.<meaning Appointment of the Church>], in 1979, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Holy See, withdraws the appointment as a professor of theology. In 1962, he was appointed as the official theological adviser of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican by Pope John XXIII [1881-1963].

⁴ The former President of Iran Sayyid Mohammad Khatami also confirmed together the role of religious people for world peace. *KBH Newsletter* (Iwamura Yoshio. August 2, 2012. 2).

⁵ 2018. S. Ikeuchi. *Shiites and Sunnis*. Shincho Sensho. 45.

At lunch time, Mr. Hans Küng said, “Church-specified believers have gradually interpenetrated to the church that become a public one. And it is the Christians who created the conservative church.” Moreover, he pointed out that “If in some church is controlled by the rich with his money power, then that church is no longer a Christian church.” (Luke 18:18-17, Mark 10:17, 27, Matthew 19:16-26) The Bible repeats that the wealth and powers are being censured. Francis of Assisi [1182-1226] has not been properly evaluated even in the 21st century. It is because that his act was the anti-capitalist revolution and the poor people’s revolution. His act should not be done in the Christian world, which is assimilated into mundane power. It is not good enough for theologians to just say love for their neighbors. Jesus himself advocated radical social change. “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’.” (Matthew 10:34-35)

b. Jesus’s way of life from the protocanonical books.

“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.” (Isaiah 61:1 / עֲנַי *anav*; Numbers 12:3 בַּשָּׂר *basar* <meaning to announce as good news >)⁶

For You are good and merciful, the shelter of the poor [*anav*]. When I cry out to You, do not ignore me. (Psalms of Solomon 5:2 Brenton's Septuagint LXX) (Song of Solomon 5:2).

anav appears 25 times in the Old Testament. It is translated in English as “poor”. Like “Now Moses was a very humble man *anav*, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth”, it doesn’t translated as “poor”. (Numbers 12:3) *anav*, in Greek is πτωχός *ptochos*. It appears 37 times in the New Testament. (Please refer Luke 6:20, Jacob 2:2-5) Therefore, it must be translated as “Moses was poorer than anyone else on the face of the earth”. God always give his looks at the oppressed people.

God defends rights of *anav*, “But with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor [*anav*] of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.” (Isaiah 11:4)

In poor times, we live close to each other, but when we are no longer poor, we tend to have no interest each other. Human relationships become weak. Then, *NEET* (Not in Education, Employment, or Training), *hikikomori* (a social recluse), and high school dropouts become usual things. The cross of Jesus Christ is the death of Jesus as a poor and oppressed one. The reason why the resurrection of Jesus is special and stumbling is that the resurrection of Jesus who was the one oppressed poorly and killed by the state power.

Therefore, the resurrection of Jesus is the hope of the oppressed poor people.

c. Religious theology, which has become an idealism of the system, has no relation with the Bible.

Saint Augustine criticized the Montanism movement of the Holy Spirit movement in the 2nd century at present-day Turkey⁷ and Donatism at North Africa. Both desired for entrancement by filling of the Holy

Sectarianism is currently the most effective political tool in Middle Eastern politics. . . it is now widely used and it will continue as it is.

⁶ 2000. T, Honda. God, stands on the side of people made to be small. Shinseisha. 58.

⁷ Montanism is an early Christian movement from around 135 AD. Montanos [date of birth and death unknown], the founder, preached the fullness of

Spirit rather than religious classes and conservative institutions, authorities and hierarchies. Saint Augustine opposed those who denied the property of the church as a curse of the church by saying, “Those who do not approve the property of the church are those who stand outside of the church”⁸. He did not accept the “accusation” of church criticism. The church was fulfilled if it was neighboring love, assistance and supportive. They have built up conservative Christian churches. However, Jesus himself was the revolutionist who cannot be compared with anyone else spiritually. He acted as a political revolutionist against the socially and politically fixed institutions that oppressed the poor.

If he was just a spiritual revolutionist, he would not have been executed by the Roman Empire. Of course, as the spiritual revolutionist, he pointed “no” to the religious hierarchy of Judaism. What do you think about separation of thinking of spiritual revolutionist and political revolutionist? In theology, it is their mission to consider a god who fulfills the deepest desire of the heart, which is even more important than the material demands of the poor. However, if we become a conservative court theologian that pursues the form for the Mass, the calendar of saints, and the hierarchy, it is impossible to free people. As the system has kept through the time, its original ideals will be neglected. The institutions become to exist not for humans. Humans would become to exist for the institutions. The institution is essentially just an assisting means. It is a problem if the seminary become the institution that directs church law and give order believers in order to enforce power control and morality. If it is more alive, the gospel should act by itself. (Qui vivra veerra.).

A church with a human face is, so to speak, a computer. Computers are useful for humans, but if humans put their full trust in computers and give absolute look, it’s a mistake. A revolution is required in the idea of relativizing computers, which is the god of efficiency, ability, and convenience as, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.” It is “*metanoia*” from “You must believe and not doubt (James 1:6)” to “For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children (1 Thessalonians 2:11)”⁹.

Religion, as Marx says, is by no means opium. The institution is non-historical. The values of Bible that come from past history is always dialectical. (ἀπολογία *apologia* Philippians 1:7, 16)¹⁰

Therefore, not only the institutions but on the same time, humans must be transformed too. We wear new clothing, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”¹¹ If you seek reconciliation for cry of Palestinians, Syrian refugees and conflict in Africa, you have to change yourself. The conservative holy temple that is tied to the power of the work, become a place to escape. It is the cause of the weakening of institutional religion. Can you say that peace has been realized by saying “Peace of the Lord” in the hall? Jesus who states “I did not come to bring peace, but a sword” appeared for revolution.

the Holy Spirit from John’s Gospel chapter 16 and criticized strict morality and the corruption of the minister. The full-scale administrative church survived until the 8th century. Tertullianus [150 / 160-220 or later] who introduced “the Trinity” was also a follower.

⁸ Features of the Just War Theory in Decretum Gratiani -A Study of the History of International Law. Journal of law and politics. Vol.26. No. 2. (1959. 123-145)

⁹ Metanoia (22 times) means 180 degrees changes from stereotypes of custom, tradition and common sense, rather than “repentance”. Hebrew word **שׁוּב** *shuv*, 1,075 times.

¹⁰ 2017. Y. Iwamura. Sensitive to the Cry of the Stone. Special gathering of Christian education. Miyagi Gakuin Women’s University. 12. <http://kicc.sub.jp/2017/05/25/%E3%80%8C%E7%9F%B3%E3%81%AE%E5%8F%AB%E3%81%B3%E3%81%AB%E6%95%8F%E6%84%9F%E3%81%A7%E3%81%82%E3%82%8D%E3%81%86%E3%80%8D/0>

¹¹ Romans chapter 12 verse 2. “be transformed by the renewing of your mind”. Greek word **μεταμορφῶ** (*metamorphoo* < from **μετά**, implying change, and **μορφῶ** form > means the transformation from inside truth not only out-look. It is just like so-called “metamorphosis” transformation of butterflies from pupae.

Jesus can no longer be found in the holy temple¹². You can meet with him in areas of disaster affected, conflict areas and slum¹³.

(3) Is Paul an affirmative of slavery?

a. The Bible has influenced by a discriminatory society.

The Lord said to Moses, "Say to Aaron: 'For the generations to come none of your descendants who has a defect may come near to offer the food of his God. No man who has any defect may come near: no man who is blind or lame, disfigured or deformed; 19no man with a crippled foot or hand, or who is a hunchback or a dwarf, or who has any eye defect, or who has festering or running sores or damaged testicles. No descendant of Aaron the priest who has any defect is to come near to present the food offerings to the Lord. He has a defect; he must not come near to offer the food of his God. He may eat the most holy food of his God, as well as the holy food; yet because of his defect, he must not go near the curtain or approach the altar, and so desecrate my sanctuary. I am the Lord, who makes them holy.'" (Leviticus 21:16-23)

Is it sound discriminated idea that God is squeamish one by saying "do not desecrate my sanctuary", so people have handicap not to allowed entering? Every religion has two views of "holy" and "dirty". In Nepal, the Dalits are recognized by a world view that "a priori" cannot escape from the caste system. There is an identification concept called "**Jyo / Fuyo** (浄不浄: clean / not clean), **Sei / Kegare** (聖穢 Holy / dirty)". Burakumin, people from discriminated communities, were willing to donate to temples even they live in extreme poverty, but their status continue in another world still. When deputy chief priest Higuchi Shinsho shown us the tombstones at Saikouji Temple in Ishinomaki City Miyagi Prefecture, we could read the discriminatory posthumous Buddhist names of "slave", "animal" and "chandala" on it¹⁴. Wasn't it supported to be possible to go to "**Gokuraku Jodo** (極楽浄土: the Land of Happiness)? When I was in elementary school, I visited the Kōyasan. At the front gate of Shinnouin, there is the board of "**Oefujyonomononyumonfukyo** (汚穢不浄之者入門不許: Unclean and dirty person is not allow to enter)". I didn't know how to read the Chinese character "**O-e** (汚穢 Dirty one)", and I thought in my mind that I cannot talk with the old-time people even we have a time-machine. Similarly, women were forbidden to enter the inside of the sumo ring. There is a ritual to spread salt to purify the sumo ring. Shinto has established a tradition of purifying uncleanness by using salt at funeral in Japan. The chief priest of Gyokuryuji Temple Ioi Masahiro laments over that original Buddhism don't use salt. It is god's teaching to avoid unclean things?¹⁵

b. Do you defend the weak?

Saint Augustine said, "There are many things in the Bible that I don't understand, but that's the responsibility

¹² 2013. G, Kondo. *Fault of Christian Thought*. Nakanishiya Publishing. 136.

"Anthropocentrism promotes 'secularization' excessively... Tolerance became a seedbed of value relativism; it is spilling into indifferent to tolerance and inviting nihilism."

¹³ 1973. J, Moltmann. *Future of Christ and end of the world*. Hasumi Kazuo (Translator). Shinkyō Publishing. 62.

¹⁴ 1997. H, Hayashi. *The root of discrimination in Buddhism*. Akashi shoten. 238.

¹⁵ The theory is that the reason for "You rubbed with salt (Ezekiel 16:4)" was to cleanse religiously the newborn. (1993. S, Kanemoto (Coauthor). *New Bible Dictionary*. Word of Life Press Ministries. 533)

"Mental function to drive away evil spirits (Apotropaic magic)" .1997. D.I, Block. *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1-24 (New International Commentary on the Old Testament)*. Eerdmans. 475.

of the translator”.

The Lord thought Moses as “Do not show favoritism to a poor person in a lawsuit”. It is written that you should “protect (Hebrew נָשָׂא *nasa* < meaning lift up, support aid assist >)” “the weak (Hebrew דַּל *dal* < meaning weak, thin, one who is low, reduced weak helpless >”, who don’t have enough to live in daily life with sufferings.

It means that you should not put pressure on vulnerable people by “raising up” that you don’t need to worry since you can live by yourself and the law is on your side¹⁶. Is it the meaning of the protocanonical books to say “You should get a grip on yourself, otherwise your wife is crying in the heaven”, “You must live alone” to the people, who don’t have any resources of income, no rice in the rice stocker and cannot make lunch box to their children? That is not.

For example, “Haram (חָרָם *charam* ‘a whole burnt offering’ Deuteronomy 13:16)” is also taken to mean extermination. Is it because of the influence of Japanese folklore scholar Yanagida Kunio [1875-1962] and “1961: Climate and Culture: A Philosophical Study trans. from Fūdo (Watsuji Tetsurō)”¹⁷? Most of all Japanese intellectuals have an image that monotheism is scary.

Of the 29 times of the noun form חָרָם *cherem*, 13 times appear in the Book of Joshua. The Semitic languages “Haram” have means of “forbidden”, “holy” and “consecrated”. “Harem” and “prostitute” are derived from Haram. In the Bible, Haram is a religious term used exclusively by priest¹⁷. It is used as a votive offering to God or as a disposal thing. In the examples of the large numbers, it is used for prohibited items. In the verb example, it means that pillage, livestock, precious metals, and prisoners of war are “putted as forbidden”. From that, it will be interpreted as the extinction of all inhabitants and the destruction of the town where was captured¹⁸. “Killing all” was common thing in the 2,000 BC, regardless of Japanese samurai or the Middle East, due to eradicate the root of problem through conflicts in inter-tribal and racial dispute. Probably it is the proof of the qualification of a leader that he has the force and control to carry out extinction. Oda Nobunaga [1534-1582] has a record of deifying his birthday.

There is a trace of pursuing deification by human who desire to be on the top in all ages and countries¹⁹. There is an example that the body of Vladimir Lenin [1870–1924], which had been embalmed, is the subject of adoration at the Lenin's Mausoleum, even after his death. I can infer that justifying herem was a usual thing by describing leaders, warlords and prophets as “gods”. German sociologist Ulrich Beck points out that if human become an agency, that is “the danger created by humans”. Humans carry out the herem. Sociologist Murata Jyuhachi quoted, “First, the ecosystem crisis. Second, the global financial crisis. And third, the danger of terrorism through cross-border terrorist network after 9/11 terrorist attacks.”²⁰ Murata is able to smell the sprouting of abandonment of responsibility that transformation of democracy into the spirit of the Crusades as

¹⁶ 1998. *Bible and Discrimination*. Japan Catholic Buraku Issues Committee. 54.

¹⁷ 2006. G. V. Rad. *Holy War in Ancient Israel*. Yamayoshi Tomohisa (Translator). Kyobunkwan. 163-164.

¹⁸ 2015. H. Katsumura. *What is the Holy war? – Learning from the Bible*. Headquarters of Executive Board of Kobe “Nobel Peace Prize for Article 9. 5

¹⁹ “The reign proclaimed his nation in his territory and ordered to visit temples on the day of his birth in May and worship their gods. The number of people gathered from each state were very large, and almost of them were unbelievers.” 1969. *Jesuit Annual Letters in Japan. Vol. 1*. Kamimura Naojiro (Translator). Ikokusoshyo. 207.

²⁰ 2013. J. Murata. *Being more risky International Society and War Responsibility – Aiming for An Inclusive Society*. Reformed Church in Japan, Western Branch. 7.

“ailing”²¹. There was a danger for Christian churches that protected the vulnerable under the wartime because the state became “*Salus*”²². You must not be pleased with the preferential treatment from the state. It can be the same as volunteers that should not be happy because they are recognized as a sub-organization of the “government”²³.

c. Did Paul admit slavery?

How did Paul insist on slavery? The woman, who published “Don't need the Bible anymore”, says as follow. The esoteric ‘the Epistle to the Romans’, also known as Paul theology, is the fundamental of Christianity. The Bible would not have been born from the four Gospels that spelt out the teachings and life of Christ, and it would have disappeared from the stage of history without connecting²⁴. New Testament scholar Tagawa Kenzo [1935-] talked about why Paul's Christianity could become a world religion. He says, “In the structure that reverses that reality and idea, we can thoroughly insist on both reality denial and reality affirmation”²⁵. Regarding Corinthians 7:20, Tagawa explained that the release from the rulers that control human as slave illegally and “freedom of human” to hope for unseen issue are the salvation of the lowest people as, “In the ideological world, we cry out for reality denial. Therefore, slaves who seek for freedom find salvation there and are absorbed into the Christian group. On the other hand, in reality, which is regarded as a tentative event, it provides the logic to approve the slavery that is the basis of the system. So, free people and intermediate rulers who use slaves are willing to accept Christianity.” Also Arai Sasagu [1930-], a member of the Japan Academy, explains about Paul's slavery that “Paul has dualism of ‘holy spirit’ and ‘natural’ idea, or dualistic thinking.”²⁶ From the perspective of “Liberation Theology”, I consider Paul's words on slavery. The three books mentioned above highlight a face of the Christian church, which has traditionally suppressed the poor. Paul's position is like a prophet of “cultural theology”, a loyal translator, and a defender of the regime. There is no mentioning of Paul's path to the abolition of slavery at all. It means, it is a convenient interpretation for the systems side, which does not convey the breakup to a discriminatory society. If scholars eating delicious foods preach to the poor in hunger, on the edge of starvation, and emptiness as “keep it as it is”, that is just hypocrisy. “But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach.” (Matthew 23: 3)

When Paul first visited the Corinthian gathering, there were probably 20 members who were called by Christ. It is written in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 26-28. “Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you

²¹ 2018. J. Murata. *Wat and Peace of Bible*. Koyoshobo. 246.

Regarding the “crusade”, please refer my document “Christ is not only for Christianity” (3) d. “From the renunciation Apostolic Age sect to the crusade”.

<https://www.christiantoday.co.jp/articles/28951/20210105/christ-is-not-only-for-christianity-3.htm>

²² “Salus” (Latin word means “health”). Mizugaki Wataru, Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University, warns on “Salus may be a dangerous one to the church”.

The reason why the crisis of “the church to be itself” occurs in the church is not only the time when the church is oppressed by the state and society. Rather, it is the time for the church to be recognized by the state and society.

(2011. *When the Church Faces Society and the State – Learning from History*. Reformed Church in Japan, Western Branch. 18.)

²³ 2014. T. Atsumi. *Disaster Volunteer*. Koubundou Publishers. 124-125, 130.

Professor Atsumi Tomohide, chairman of the Nippon Volunteer Network Active in Disaster, concerns. The “drive of orders” has diminished interest of volunteers in each and every one of the disasters affected people, and the characteristic of disaster volunteers to operate flexibly by setting the victims on the center of their minds has been lost.

²⁴ 2020. H. Nohara. *Don't need the Bible anymore*. Gentosha Literary Publication. 19.

²⁵ 1988. K. Tagawa. *Formation of a Critical Subject*. San-ichi Publishing. 114.

²⁶ 1973. S. Arai. *Problems in early Christian history*. Shinkyō Publishing. 61.

were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are.” It was a congregation made up of “equal as nothing” such as “the weak things of the world”, “the lowly things of this world”, and “the despised things”. God’s choice and calling are Moses, Gideon, Amos and *anav* is consistent. Regardless of occupation, wide meaning of life living condition and lifestyle are “calling” conditions²⁷. Paul was disappointed when he returned to Corinth. “Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich!” (1 Corinthians 4:8) It seems like African countries that have changed a few years after their independence. The Corinthian church has improved its standard of living and has become a salon. The sensibility to empathize with the poor has gone.

Let’s look at the context of the First Epistle to the Corinthians chapter 7 verse 20, which is our theme scripture. “Were you a slave when you were called? Don’t let it trouble you—although if you can gain your freedom, do so. For the one who was a slave when called to faith in the Lord is the Lord’s freed person; similarly, the one who was free when called is Christ’s slave.” (Verse 21-22) He didn’t encourage to be “free (Greek ἐλεύθερος *eleutheros* <be a free person>)” from “slave (Greek δούλος *doulos* <status owned by the master without having the status of a free person>)”. This is because people began to value fellowship with “wisdom one”, “powerful one”, and “one from good family”, and become indifferent to the poor. As the result of the addition of “God’s wisdom” to the members of Corinth, they started to proud of their wisdom²⁸. Even in the church, they started checking the existence of God’s blessing based on the wisdom of educational background, qualification priority, and financial management ability. As “Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom”, they accept incorporate the standards of the world. (1 Corinthians 1:22). Humans forget that Christ abandoned the “glory” he had under his control and took “instead of nullifying himself and taking the form of *doulos*”. (John 17: 5, Philippians 2: 7) It is a way to give back glory to yourself, who is full of freedom and wisdom. The teaching of Christ and Paul’s theology have no differences. Paul himself kept *doulos* at his end. Paul speaks to the Corinthians. Paul states that he is a leather craftsman who makes tents as, “We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored! . . . We work hard with our own hands.” (1 Corinthians 4:10-12, Acts 18:3)²⁹ Paul’s fingers, which used leather tools such as knives to do his work, had thick knuckles and would not elegantly fingers to do office desk work. That is a bottom-pointed-minded as, “Surely you remember, brothers and sisters, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you.” (1 Thessalonians 2:9)³⁰

After Paul got out from slavery and gained a status, position and social rank, he didn’t try to change the

²⁷ 1984. Y. Sakakibara. *Explanation on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Seibunsha International. 334-335.

²⁸ Greek word, σοφία *sophia* <Including the applied ability to correctly and accurately determine and act on each and every thing in daily life based on spiritual insight into God’s will and purpose>. <The noun form of the adjective form “wise” σοφός *sophos*. 1 Corinthians 2:8>

²⁹ 1990. H. Ronald F. *The social context of Paul’s ministry*. Kasahara Yoshihisa (Translator). Shinkyō Publishing.

³⁰ 1999. F. Fukatsu. *Bottom-pointed-minded*. Kanita Publishing Department. 237.

Fukatsu says. “You can’t give your hand because you are just looking from the top there to the bottom. It is all fine to start with “the one” who you actually meet after you go down to the very bottom point, not just the surface of bottom line. It is the church that made a mistake of their order of steps without doing nothing. It is welfare to attempt handling just ‘number’ from the top with their apotheosis-minded.”

institutions. Rather than becoming a free person, he stayed on the side of the slaves and it probably called the Liberation theology, he liberated theology. That is a release from the bottom, not from the top.

Did Paul affirm slavery? No, he does not admit institutional oppression by saying “You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of human beings.” (1 Corinthians 7:23). He did not agree with the structural evil, oppression, and dominance of the ruling class that leave behind the abandoned “people made to be small” who could not even beg. Christ also did “*Kyoku* (共苦: Share sufferings)” with *ochlos* whose leather sack were almost exploded with tears of angers, sufferings, and grief, because they were excluded social class, the society, and the institutional religions. Paul shown “the foolishness of what was preached” through Jesus’s way of life. (1 Corinthians 1:21)

Moreover, as a “slave”.

<Conclusion>

“Salvation” in “Liberation theology” is “release”. It is a paradoxical theology. It is not “development”, “advancement”, nor “harmony”. It cannot make a scrum with oppression side with the slogans of “growth”, “progress”, and “coincidence”. Nor it does not aim to be released from the sinful “spirit”. If you interpret liberation as an ultimately freedom from sins, you cannot sublimate by understanding sin as “alienated”. We will always make our voice jointly about the “Gospel for people made to be small” across over sects, idealisms and institutional religions. The God of Christ is not a stillness God “in heaven”, but the active God. When Ochlos moans, he is the one who cannot be on the sideline. “Who stoops down to look” is the active God that “My Presence will go with you” for the needy people who have been lost in all ways. (Psalm 113: 6, Exodus 33:14, Numbers 22:22)³¹

I do like to imitate the footsteps of Paul who acted with God that lives together with discriminated people, slaves, and the crying.

³¹ 1993. T, Kuribayashi. *Theology of the Crown of thorns*. Shinkyō Publishing, 346.