

“Christianity and Refugee”

July 4th, 2021

Kobe International Christ Church

Pastor Iwamura Yoshio

Theme Scripture:

“Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.” (Isiah Chapter 1 Verse 17) -New International Version

*English pronunciation in parentheses after each Greek and Hebrew word.

<Introduction>

The “Flower Demo” is a Japanese social movement that protests against sexual violence by putting flowers on. It began in March 2019 because of series of unjustified acquittals of sexual violence crimes. Sentence of acquittal to criminal, and crying women. It is hard for sexual victims to raise their voices since their environment take advantage of their psychological weakness. In Kobe, the first request on the substance of sexual damage was filed on June 11, 2019. Initially it started by about 20 people, but increased to 80 people. For the first time, women victims talked about their experience that they could not tell to their family, friends and at school, on the road in public with a microphone. Among them, there was a case of a second-year lady student at Kobe University. She has been sexually abused between the ages of 7 to 14 by her father who was school principal. A 30s-year-old woman, who was sexually assaulted by her boss at work said revealingly, “The long road of civil trial has just ended. I thought I could return to normal life, but I still has a hard time because of memory that terrible time”.¹ It is even more difficult to grasp the actual situation of damages of LGBT since it more hidden.² As there are eyes in the heaven as “*Aku-in-atsu-ka ten-mou-kai-kai* (悪因悪果 天網恢恢 : evil acts bring evil outcomes / heaven's net has large meshes, but nothing escapes), it is “There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. (Luke 12:2)” As a result of the trial, since acquittals have given repeatedly, the situation cannot be seen to be a law-abiding country. I don’t think the victims would have enjoyed eating together with their families anymore. Victims suffered from lonely eating with feeling of biting sand must have been refugees from homes, families and fateful communities.

During the wartime, Unit 731 gathered excellent doctors and researchers from all over Japan. During the wartime, Surgeon General Ishii Shirō (Director of the Epidemic Prevention and Water Purification Department), head of Unit 731, of the former Manchuria, secretly developed biological experiments and bacterial weapons and used them in actual battle fields. He went crazy for refugee hunting. He seated as a professor at several universities without being accused with postwar crimes.³

¹ 2021. *The Asahi Shimbun*. February 11.

² Even it hasn’t been over a year since I wrote a book review about ignorance, indifference, and reluctance toward “LGBT (Lesbian (homosexual woman), Gay (homosexual man), Bisexual (Pansexuality), Transgender)” and other sexual minorities on “Hon no hiroba (July issue, 2020)”, but nowadays, LGBT become LGBTQ because “Questioning (those how can’t or not sure about their gender or sexual orientation, or not willing to decide)” has joined.

³ 1999. Tsuneishi Keiichi. *Organized crime of medical scientists - Kwantung Army Unit 731*. Asahi Bunko.

Surgeon General Ishii Shirō (Director of the Epidemic Prevention and Water Purification Department. Head of Unit 731. He graduated from the post-graduate medical schooling at Kyoto Imperial University at the top. President of the Kyoto Imperial University). Tabei Kanou (Salmonella typhi research unit. Professor of Bacteriology, the Kyoto University,

If judicial court stop working, it is “How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, ‘Violence!’ but you do not save? (Habakkuk 1:2)” “Truly you are a God who has been hiding himself (deus absconditus), the God and Savior of Israel. (Isaiah 45:15)” This morning, I would like to think together the way of “*Kyosei* (共生: Life together)”, “*Kyoku* (共苦: Share sufferings)”, “*Ku-en* (苦縁: Relationship to share sufferings)” with people, who have been oppressed by their families, villages, and countries.

Table of contents

(1) Don't disrespect human rights	2
a. Justness of the Bible	2
b. Bend the judgment	3
c. Foreigner are refugees	4
(2) Share suffering	4
a. Continuous increasing of forced displacement	4
b. The reality of the Middle East	6
c. Inhumanity of Japanese Government	7
(3) Brazen-faced Christian Church	8
a. Our salvation of spirit rather than rescue of refugee	8
b. Hell on earth – Palestinian Refugees	10
c. Humanitarian aid should not be politically dependent	11

(1) Don't disrespect human rights

a. Justness of the Bible

We should listen to the complaints of victims of sexual abuse and address his / her rights. Those law judges, layers, and the Ministry of Justice, who practice the law, do not protect the human rights of the weak. It is the “rights (מִשְׁפָּט [mshpht <justice>])” as, “To deprive the poor of their *rights* and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless. (Isaiah 10:2)” The word “lawsuits” in “Do not deny justice *mshpht* to your poor people in their lawsuits. (Exodus 23:6)” is the Hebrew word “רִיב [rib]” does not dismiss the proceeding of little children, single mothers and refugees, and does not refuse appeals of refugees and even never give up to “defend (rights)”, “deal with (difficulty, misfortune)” and “struggle, fight”. It has also been suggested to fight against vulnerable groups, oppressed people, and discriminated people in society. (Psalm 74:22).

The word “justice” in the theme scripture, “Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow”, is “*mshpht*” in the Hebrew word. Sekine Masao [1912-2000], a member of the Japan Academy, translates “*mshpht*” as “rights”. The Japanese translation of the Old Testament “Sekine Translation”, is the most academically trusted. “Yahweh works righteousness and restores the rights [mshpht] of all oppressors. (Psalm 103:6 Sekine Translation)”⁴ No

Professor of the Hyogo College of Medicine). Yoshimura Hisato (Frostbite research unit. President of the Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine. Special Committee Member of the Science Council of Japan, Antarctic Research. Director of the Japanese Society of Biometeorology). Toda Shyozo (Professor of the Kyoto Imperial University. Special Committee Member of the Science Council of Japan, Antarctic Research. President of the Kanazawa University)

⁴ My writing, “Will you join the transformation of society, even you are dead?” (2021. Kobe Shimbun Kaikan Series of Bible

need to ask but God is “who stoops down to look” about human rights from oppression to liberation. (Psalm 113: 6).

The definition of “*mshpht*” is “judicial functions and functionaries in government”.⁵ The etymology is derived from “שָׁפַט [shpht] (verb: govern, rule)”. George Ernest Wright, a biblical archaeologist, states that “If Yahweh is a righteous, it is because that Yahweh helps them for the ‘rights’ of the people”.⁶

b. Bend the judgment

As “Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits”, the Bible mentions not to bend “*mshpht*” again and again. (Exodus 23:6) Often, sexual assault crimes are acquitted. It means, “Your rulers are rebels, partners with thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow’s case does not come before them. (Isaiah 1:23)” There is a fact that a Japanese chief judge gave acquittals one after another, and he became famous.⁷ As an aside, on June 17, 2017, the chief judge said “dismiss the original decision” in an appeal verdict of a man, who was charged for a violation of the Stimulant Drugs Control Act at the Osaka High Court, even though he supposed to say “dismiss the appeal”. The judges on both sides of him pointed out his saying, so he rephrased his verdict.⁸ It can be just simply saying that politicians, officials, economic leaders, scholars lack a sense of tension. It would be a hypocrisy that you might not imagine from the strict attitude of trying to keep eyes on the people for such as separation of wastes. “So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. (Matthew 23:3)” It is just about an all talk and no action. Unlike the incompetent “government”, God never hides for rescuing people from unjust oppression. God interrupted as, “Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. (Judges 2:16)”

God has been used “Judges”, Hebrew noun form “שֹׁפֵט [shpht]”, to resolve legal disputes, conflicts, and discord's. The Christian church term “don’t judge” can be said to be non-biblical.⁹ “Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly (Greek: *δικαίαν κρίσιν [dikaian krisin]*.) (John 7:24, 2 Corinthians 5:12, 6:3)”¹⁰

Words. Vol 83. May 31). Genesis 18:25, Isaiah 40:14, Jeremiah 7: 5, Amos 5:15, Micah 3:1, 8, 9; 6: 8, Habakkuk 1:4, Jeremiah 3:5, Psalm 25:9. Quoted translation of “rights”; I Samuel 8:9, 11; 10:25, Isaiah 10:2, Jeremiah 32: 7-8.

⁵ 1988. H. R. Laird. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament. Vol.2.* The Moody Bible Institute. 948.

⁶ 1971. G. E. Wright. *The faith of Israel.* Shinya Michiharu (Translator). Seibunsha International. 65.

⁷ Judicial system in Japan, overturned a guilty verdict and get sentence of acquittal in appeal trials are rare. In 2015, there were only 21 cases in a year. However, the chief judge Fukuzaki Shinichiro [1952- (the 31st)] gave verdict of acquittals for a trial of misappropriating money on May 18, 2017 (1.5-year sentence in the first trial), a stimulant smuggling on May 11 (11 years sentence in the first trial), and an indecent exposure on April 27 (1 year sentence in the first trial). He acquitted cases almost once a week. (2017. *Hanrei Times. November issue Vol.1440.* Hanrei Times. October 25.)

⁸ 2017. *Mainichi Shimbun.* June 28.

⁹ “*The Book of Judges*” is derived from an ancient Chinese word “士師 (Shishi)” that means judge. (1998. New Catholic Encyclopedia II. New Catholic Encyclopedia Compilation Committee. 1194).

The time of Judges was from death of Joshua to Samuel.

They were responsible for arbitration and judgment of conflicts, disputes, and complains between people.20213. Y, Iwamura. *Journal Mana. October Issue.* Inochino Kotoba shya. 27. <http://kicc.sub.jp/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/d5e458c7968ae6d0acd22fc3fb000053.pdf>

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 65. The holy word “Do not judge (Matthew 7: 1, Luke 6:37) has been imprinted in our minds. Believers have been mind-controlled for nearly 1,500 years, even against the injustice of our leaders.

<http://kicc.sub.jp/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/d5e458c7968ae6d0acd22fc3fb000053.pdf>

c. Foreigner are refugees

“Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt. Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless. If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry. My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives will become widows and your children fatherless. If you lend money to one of my people among you who is needy, do not treat it like a business deal; charge no interest. If you take your neighbor’s cloak as a pledge, return it by sunset, because that cloak is the only covering your neighbor has. What else can they sleep in? When they cry out to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate. (Exodus 22:21-27)”

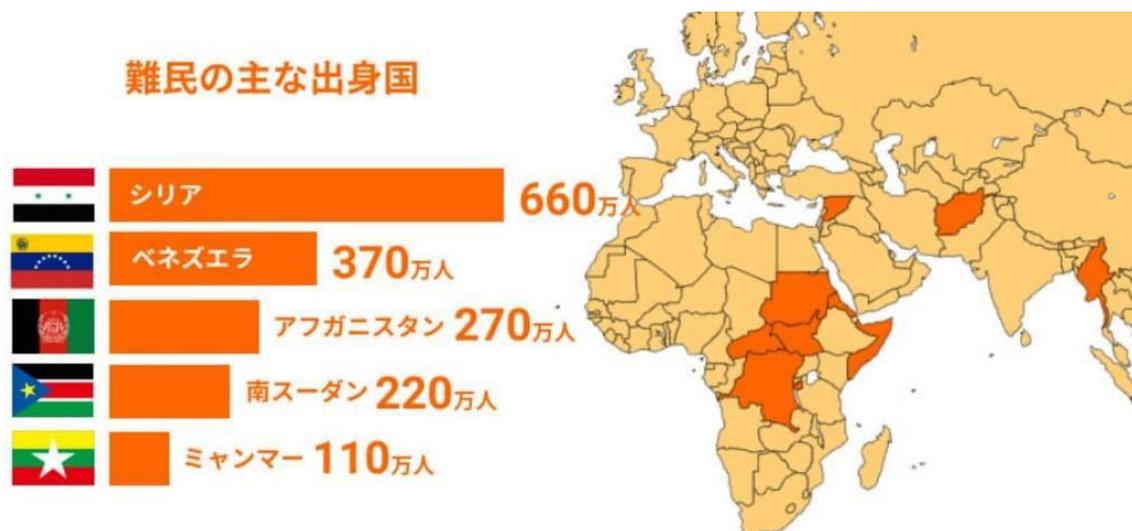
The Bible consistently mentions “foreigner (Hebrew: גֵּר [ger], Greek: πάροικος [paroikos])”, that should not neglect them.¹¹ In “Liberation theology”¹², “foreigner” is replaced as “refugee” and be understood.

“All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners (πάροικος [paroikos]) and strangers (παρεπίδημος [parepidemous]) on earth. (Hebrews 11:13)” “Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners (paroikos) and exiles (parepidemous), to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. (1 Peter 2:11)”

Therefore, the people of the marginal villages, the oppressed people, and the volunteers who go to the traumatic fields of the disaster are also “foreigners”.

(2) Share suffering

a. Continuous increasing of forced displacement



The number of forced displacements in the world has increased for the nine consecutive years. Nowadays, 1% of the people on the earth faced for forced displacement. The total number was used to be less than 40 million in 2011, but it become double. The majority of the world’s refugees almost nine in ten, are accepted in their neighboring areas, low and middle economic income countries, which are also

¹¹ It is described in the Greek Old Testament (Septuagint: LXX) Exodus Chapter 22 Verse 20 that they are προσήλυτος *proselutos* <English word “proselyte” derived from this word. The original meaning is προσέρχομαι *proserchomai* “the one come from outside”>, and even they were not Jewish but they were circumcised and became Jewish.

¹² 2021. Y, Iwamura. *What Liberation Theology is?* Kobe International Christ Church. May 2.

at risk. Least developed countries, which are delaying in developing, covers 27% of all asylum acceptance.

Those forcibly displaced people due to conflict and persecution (details of 82.4 million)
Refugees 26.4 million (UNHCR support target 20.7 million + UNRWA [United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East] support target 5.7 million)

- Internally displaced people 48 million
- Asylum-seeker 4.1 million
- People fled to Venezuela 3.9 million¹³

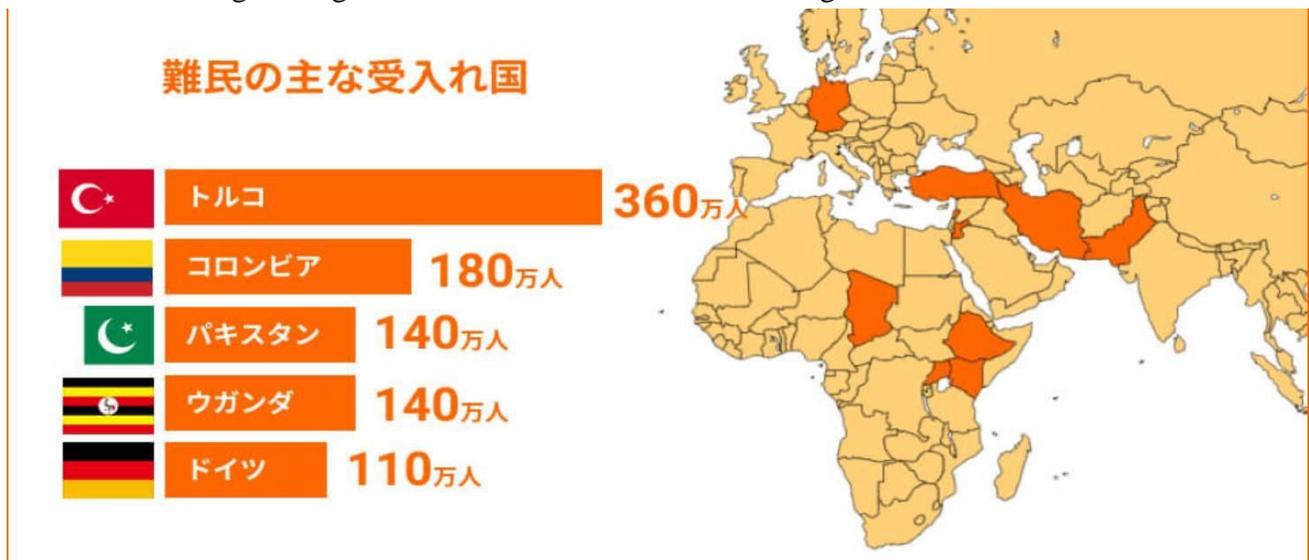
Country accepting forcibly displaced people

1. Turkey 3.7 million people
2. Colombia 1.7 million
3. Pakistan 1.4 million / Uganda 1.4 million
4. Germany 1.2 million

More than two-thirds of all refugee's home countries, 68% of them are concentrated in five countries.

1. Syria 6.7 million
2. Venezuela 4 million
3. Afghanistan 2.6 million
4. South Sudan 2.2 million
5. Myanmar 1.1 million

Evacuation to neighboring countries 73%. Children under the age of 18 42%



*Approximately 1 million children were born as refugees between year of 2018 and 2020.
(Annual average is 290,000 ~ 340,000)

Stateless people millions

*The number of stateless people as of the end of 2020 based on the totals of governments and other organizations in 94 countries is 4.2 million. However, the actual numbers are estimated to be even higher, since there are no data on stateless people in many countries.¹⁴

¹³ UNHCR 2016 Materials.

¹⁴ UNHCR 2016 Materials.

By 2020, the number of people who forcibly displaced from their hometown due to conflict and persecution in the world became more than 80 million. The number do not decrease even in the COVID-19 disaster.

b. The reality of the Middle East

The Kobe International Sustaining Organization has been visiting since 2018 Syrian refugees who are facing the most humanitarian damages. However, nothing seems to be accomplished. The tragedy of Syria began in 2011, the same year that the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami occurred. In the following year, on August 3, 2012, I attended to World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP). I reunited with Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim the Syriac Orthodox Archbishop of Aleppo at there. That was the first time since the 8th World Conference of Religions for Peace in 2006. I prayed for the end of the conflict in Syria with Mr. Ibrahim. However, after my returning to Japan, the contact from Mr. Ibrahim was lost. We cannot handle enough all the damage caused by disasters, tsunami, and earthquakes in Japan. Moreover, I cannot go and visit Syria to make sure his safety and life since it is a limited opportunity to visit there for Japanese. Is there no choice but just leave it? It is beyond the reach of my own power. There were too many restrictions. On December 28, 2017, I infiltrated in to Syrian refugee camp from Beirut, Lebanon, with carrying rice, stationery and relief materials. I showed a picture of Mr. Ibrahim and asked each Syrian I met to get some information. The country was at level 9 of dangerous area for destination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I was surrounded by orphans, who lost their parents in Israeli Air Force and US bombardment, in several refugee camps. There is no support from the United Nations, Children have no way of living. Orphans are crying and the Bible points out that, “How long will you a defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked? Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. (Psalm 82:2-4)”



Mariche, December 30, 2017

2018年(平成30年)2月23日

内戦のシリアに孤児院を

国内外の救世活動 神戸国際支援機構

シリアは2011年以降、国内で激しい内戦が起きている。22日に神戸国際支援機構が、シリア北部の孤児院を訪問した。孤児院には、シリア北部で避難生活を送っている約500人の子どもたちが暮らしている。孤児院の運営は、国際支援機構が担当している。孤児院の子どもたちは、シリア北部で避難生活を送っている。孤児院の運営は、国際支援機構が担当している。



2018年(平成30年)5月3日(木曜日)

シリア遺児 見過ごせぬ

神戸国際支援機構

シリア内戦で犠牲になった子どもたち。シリア北部で避難生活を送っている約500人の子どもたちが暮らしている。孤児院の運営は、国際支援機構が担当している。孤児院の子どもたちは、シリア北部で避難生活を送っている。孤児院の運営は、国際支援機構が担当している。



平成30年(2018年)2月23日

シリア難民に関心を

神戸の団体が報生会 県 庁

シリア内戦で犠牲になった子どもたち。シリア北部で避難生活を送っている約500人の子どもたちが暮らしている。孤児院の運営は、国際支援機構が担当している。孤児院の子どもたちは、シリア北部で避難生活を送っている。孤児院の運営は、国際支援機構が担当している。



現地養護施設建設へ

シリア内戦で犠牲になった子どもたち。シリア北部で避難生活を送っている約500人の子どもたちが暮らしている。孤児院の運営は、国際支援機構が担当している。孤児院の子どもたちは、シリア北部で避難生活を送っている。孤児院の運営は、国際支援機構が担当している。



c. Inhumanity of Japanese Government

The Japanese government is a small-minded. In a 1978 verdict, the Supreme Court acknowledged the Japanese immigration authorities, saying, “Under international customary law, whether to accept foreigners or not, and in what kind of cases shall we give certain condition to accept, the state can decide freely”.

On June 18, 2021, UNHCR announced the number of refugees in the world in 2020 for the “World Refugee Day” on June 20.¹⁵ Last year, the number of people forcibly displaced from their hometowns due to conflict, persecution, violence and human rights violations increased to nearly 82.4 million despite the COVID-19 disaster. It increased 2.9 million compare to 2019, that was 4% more than 79.5 million. The number of asylum-seekers who are under applying for asylum and waiting for the result is almost the same as 2019 (4.1 million). On the other hand, the number of registered asylum applications is about 1.3 million, which is 1 million (43%) less than 2019.¹⁶

Despite Japan being a member of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the rate of refugee status determination is less than 1%. For the 10,375 refugee status applicants in 2019, 44 (0.4%) were certified. In 2020, the number of asylum-seekers decreased significantly to 3,936 due to the impact of the COVID-19 disaster. The person, who was certified, were 47 people (1.2%).

It ranks at 110th out of 148 member countries and it means that Japan disregards the responsibilities of the country which has registered the treaty. Long-term detention, long-term provisional release, and forcible repatriation are human rights violations. For example, UNHCR expressed “very serious

¹⁵ Abbreviation for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Commonly known as UNHCR. African refugees pronounce it as “ANCHORS”. Established on December 14, 1950. Ogata Sadako [1927-2019] is the first Japanese head of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as well as the Special Representative of the Government support for Afghanistan. Roman Catholic believer. Her academic advisor was professor Robert A. Scalapino, an American political relationship scholar in East Asian studies.
¹⁶ Global Trends Report.

concern” to the Japanese government, since it makes asylum-seekers to return to their countries if their applications were denied more than three times for the same reason.¹⁷ However, the problem that obvious low refugee recognition rates have not been resolved, and we may tend to be indifferent to helping refugees who are becoming “non-recognized” one after another. In addition, it is necessary to pay close attention to the response to refugees from Myanmar (Burma), which is expected to increase from now.

(3) Brazen-faced Christian Church

a. Our salvation of spirit rather than rescue of refugee

What did the Christian Church spoke out when the Spanish flu [1917-1920]¹⁸ swept Japan? Did Uchimura Kanzo [1861-1930]¹⁹, who represents Christians in Japan at that time, also talk about the care for the victims of the Spanish flu? Rather, like Nakata Juji [1870-1939], he probably prayed with saying that the Second Coming²⁰ is near, and filled halls with people during a pandemic (Widespread infectious disease. Greek “*pan-* [all]” + “*dēmos* [local people]”) time. A crowd of evangelism-emphasizing hold meetings, special lectures, and evangelism meeting that the Second Coming of Christ is nearby. A fellow pastor who believes in dispensationalism declared that the Second Coming of Christ will be happened at any moment.²¹ They just prioritized on evangelism and own salvation to ready for the Second Coming, and the church did not stay close to the care of Japanese people, who died of illness or were at the point of death. How is the Church stand close to the terrified people for their death under the COVID-19 disaster? Entering to the Meiji era, Christian missionaries came from overseas.

It seemed to be a fascinating teaching for former samurai in rural areas who were not promoted by the center of the Meiji government. Uchimura argued, “The world will be saved by Christianity. We will be saved by Christianity that is grafted on Bushido.”²² Pastor Uemura Masahisa, a former samurai along

¹⁷ View of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on April, 2021. A bill for partial amendments to Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act [Submitted to the 204th Diet].

¹⁸ 500 million, nearly 30% of the world’s population is infected, and 50 to 20 million were dead (WHO). Estimated that one in three people in the world was infected. A total of patients is 23,804,672, and total of death is 388,727. (Japan. Home Department. Central Sanitary Bureau)

¹⁹ Nakada Jūji emphasized with the head title, “To speed up his coming”. “The more one can be saved, the closer the arrival of Jesus will be.” 1973. I, Yoneda. *Nakada Jūji. Vol.1.* Word of Life. 478.

Even when the Spanish flu swept the entire Japan as “Outbreak of epidemic catarrh was severe”, Uchimura Kanzo held lectures “The Second Coming and Evangelism” one after another rather than avoiding “three Cs” (three close-contact situations: closed spaces with poor ventilation; crowded places with many people nearby; and close-contact settings such as close-range conversations). 1983. Collection of Uchimura Kanzo. Iwanami Shoten. 31, 37.

²⁰ The Second Coming is the apocalyptic theory that Christ returns and accomplish the rule of God.

I talked about God’s reality and future by comparing to the Normandy Landing operation in my writing that “The death and resurrection of Christ is the D-day, and the Second Coming and the Last Judgement are like a V-day”.

2000.Y, Iwamura. *Evangelical Theology: Eschatology and Self-Justification of Heresy.* 127-128. http://www.evangelical-theology.jp/jets-hp/jets/paper_in_printable/031-5_in_printable.pdf

²¹ Ibid. (Okayama Hideo. 37)

“The theology of Dispensationalism was advocated by the British, John Nelson Darby and others in the mid-19 century, and it had been spread rapidly in the United States in the 20th century by connecting with the fundamentalist movement....The special eschatology, especially it is “the Great Tribulation”. It is supposed that the church and Israel will be distinguished, and that during the tribulation, the church will be chosen to be in heaven, and Israel will be left on the Earth.”

2021. Y, Iwamura. *Is it right to be indifferent to tragedy in Palestine?* Erasmus Institute of Peace Studies. May 16. 1-2.

²² 1998. *Collection of History of the United Church of Christ in Japan. Vol. 2. The United Church of Christ in Japan during the war time (1941 ~ 1945).* The Board of Publications The United Church of Christ in Japan. 322.

with Uchimura Kanzo and Nitobe Inazō [1862-1933], also taught that Christianity was grafted on the samurai. He said, “Our church doesn’t need rickshaw man nor craftsmen” “We are people who want to carry the good side of the samurai, to serve the lord of heaven and the earth, Messiah, and to graft the spirit of the cross on it.”²³

It was detrimental in Christian history in Japan that Christianity did not grafted to the people, instead to samurai. In the 1st century C.E., it was the unnamed people who surrounded and obeyed Christ. “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)”

Crowds “ὄχλος [*Ochlos*]” are those who cannot engage in production, those who are sick, have intellectual and physical disabilities, and have been forcibly displaced from their hometowns, that is “abandoned people”, and an outcast who just walking around to beg. However, Constantine the Great [Constantine I. 280-337] officially recognized the rode of Christianity by the Edict of Milan (313 AD), and it became the state religion of the Roman Empire by Theodosius the Great in 392. Christianity went beyond indifference, irresponsibility, and oppression to the sick, women, orphans, prostitutes, and forefingers, people at the bottom level of society. Authorities that have magisterium of church had built a religious elite empire that favors the wealthy people.

The priest speaks from the pulpit. He used the story of crowd who greeted Christ as their Messiah and King.

As “The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, ‘Hosanna!’ ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’ ‘Blessed is the king of Israel!’ (John 12:12-13)”, it comments on the enthusiasm of “*Ochlos*”. And it follows as, “But the whole crowd shouted, ‘Away with this man! Release Barabbas to us!’ But they kept shouting, ‘Crucify him! Crucify him!’A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. (Luke 23:18,21,27)”, and kept talking about turnaround of “*Ochlos*” that cannot be trusted. Therefore, they have repeatedly emphasized to be obedient to the voice of the leader. However, are “*Ochlos*” like a wave that come and go?

For about 1,500 years, the church has repeatedly said “You all killed Jesus Christ”, and passed on to “*Ochlos*”. The Bible proves a conspiracy. There are records of religious leaders to plan an intrigue as, “Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people made their plans how to have Jesus executed. (Matthew 27:1)” As it is recorded as “persuaded (Greek πείθω *peitho* <persuade, to be convinced, to provoke>)” in “But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed. (Matthew 27:20)”, they instigated “*Ochlos*”. During the crucifixion, the priests led people and were shouting. “As soon as the chief priests and their officials saw him, they shouted, ‘Crucify! Crucify!’” But Pilate answered, “You take him and crucify him. As for me, I find no basis for a charge against him. (John 19:6)” Therefore, the mature understanding is required to look into the mastermind that made people to say “Crucify” Jesus (Hebrews 5:11).

It is essential to explain the Bible by the Bible. In other words, it is not about evangelism about God in

²³ 1894 [Meiji 27]. M, Uemura. *Gospel News*. The United Church of Christ in Japan.

1967. K, Takeda. *Indigenous and Apostasy: Traditional Ethea and Protestant*. Shinkyō Publishing. 11-14.

Takeda points out that Uchimura and his colleagues have strong aware of the problem of trying to establish Christianity in the heritage of Japanese spiritual history.

COVID-19 disaster. We should humbly listen to what God is saying about “*Ochlos*”.²⁴

b. Hell on earth – Palestinian Refugees

As for the Middle East, it seems that information through media is only about bad side of Assad administration.²⁵ The critic method of Modern people, who are continuously imprinted with the trivia of television, are paralyzed that “In contrast to the traditional view of something, 'No, the facts are not', but it actually exists like this.”²⁶ Human who cannot recognize things without images cannot see the marginal villages. They don't try to determine the fact of the problem, whether it is caused by a natural disaster or a man-made disaster. That means, the discharge of “defamiliarization”²⁷, which is described by Ōe Kenzaburo in his book “Method of Novel”, is degenerated. We are tossed up and down by the random flood of information in an endless stream. For example, blinded believers who think that the moaning of orphans can be solved in the Millennial Kingdom, so it is not even on the prayer list at the church. Own salvation of spirit ruled the church rather than rescue of other people. Not only in Japan, but also the German Christian church under Hitler regime, they thought it is fine if they free from their sin through the Jesus's crucify.²⁸ Is it possible to say that the system has changed with the transition from dictatorship to democracy?

What is “sin”? Isn't it a structural evil that has suppressed the people since the book of Exodus? Are people with schizophrenia, Hansen's disease (leprosy), people with disabilities with difficulties, and people cannot even work, socially alienated? People at the bottom who are unrelated to qualifications, power, and wealth, cannot even beg. They are even having a hard time for place to live, eating and clothes. On the other hand, the priest speaks from the pulpit of the church. He let attendance, who have received eternal life, to thank for grace like chanting the title.

They have repeatedly comforted the privileges that only for believers, “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)”, “I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. (Psalm 37:25)”

On September 4, 2018, I discussed information about the construction of an orphan facility in Aleppo at a Syrian center with Baraa Seraj Aldeen (28 years old), Laila Badenjki (25 years old) and her daughter Maria (3 years old). They all are born and living in Aleppo. I discussed with Syrian, Palestinians, and Lebanese about the issue of human rights that has being neglected, while we were having a dinner. In Lebanon, Syrian people are second-rater, and talk about Palestinians, education, employment, and medical service don't exist for human being due to the strong attitude of Israel.

²⁴ 1922. K, Barth. *The Epistle to the Romans* (Original: *Der Römerbrief*). Munchen. Barth speaks in the introduction of the second edition of his book. He took “eforrt on things” and “to see through historical things and look carefully insight into the spirit of the Bible”, therefore, we can't grasp human emotions from human side by intuition. He argued that the Bible is the only way to hear the voice of God.

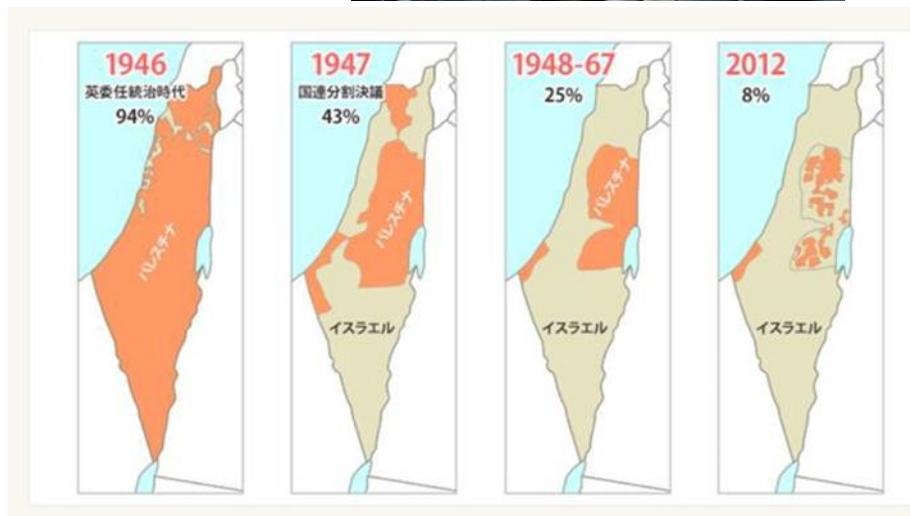
²⁵ The movie “*Denial*” that dispute about whether the Holocaust existed or not, was screened in Japan in January 2018. After seeing the trailer, I posted the following message on my Facebook dated January 25th. Even in Japan, the media denying the “Nanjing Massacre” and “The contest to kill 100 people using a sword”, and the false proof of Professor Higashinakano Shūdō, who also denied those incidents, were proved. The Supreme Court ordered Professor Higashinakano and the publisher to pay a total of 4 million yen. The “denial of Nanjing Massacre” – the common understanding only among Japanese people. I do like to ponder the meaning of the denial of Japanese army's “comfort women” and forced entainment against will of people before and during the wartime, were far away from the common sense of the world.

²⁶ 1994. K, Ōe. *Method of Novel*. Iwanami Shoten. 8

²⁷ 1966. V. B, S.hklovsky. *Theory of Prose*. Mizuno Tadao (Translator). Keiso Shobo. 305.

²⁸ 2021. Y, Iwamura. *Is the Old Testament sin a Spiritual sin?* Sunday worship message. Kobe International Christ Church. March 21.

Historically, even though many of Palestinians were Christians (Arab orthodox) long before the Christian church on the Mediterranean coast around the 4th century, they have been looked down as “dirty” citizens.



c. Humanitarian aid should not be politically dependent

Although Japan’s COVID-19 disaster, typhoons, and heavy rains have been reported with details, the Japanese media rarely cares about the reality of the Palestinian district. Even if the content has already been reported, if you dig it up by yourself carefully, it will have a new meaning. For example, Beirut in Lebanon, called Paris in the Middle East, is a modern city. There is a light and darkness at there as well. Education, welfare, and employment in the West Bank are unstable. There is no police, and the Palestinians themselves have no choice but to deal with security. It is a completely abandoned residential area. It has been more than 70 years; the great power countries have been kept silence about it.²⁹

Sociologist Murata Jyuhachi says. “Religious leaders, even in any religions, should strive to send

²⁹ 2018. Y, Iwamura. *The Greatest Humanitarian Tragedy in History – the 2nd Syrian Volunteer Report*. 5-7.

policy-makers and believers, who wish for peace and justice, to the society. In Palestine, there was the time when Muslims and Jews were existing together. Perhaps, one of the reasons was that religious leaders and politicians of that time did not want to resort using violence, but dealt with the matter through ‘dialogue’ and kept the attitude to listen the fact of each religion.”³⁰

Nirmeen Ahmad Hazineh (49 year old) from Beirut, who was taking care of the Palestinian life to be improved, was shot dead two years ago. I met with Hadi 12 years old, in 2018, but he/she had no hope for the future. Children become impossible to go to school since their parents were killed, and there is no proper job for Palestinians. Is there any Japanese who can understand the motives of Palestinians to fight against Israel, the United States, and other great powers, which already have a good vaccination structure? You cannot see the world only by simple thinking about that “Islam = terrorism”, Assad regime is evil³¹, and Palestinian terrorism is the enemy of human being.

I will not die until I am able to see the advent of day when Palestine will be released to a place where they can earn justice. Because, as it says, “but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many”, when I face-to-face with Christ, who said “give his life”, my essence of “to serve” is sharpened and emerged. (Mark 10:45). The one who want to serve to God should stand on the side of refugees.

<Conclusion>

Tolerating discrimination, social inequality, and oppression, in a sense, it means standing on the side of the hierarchy that receives privileges. There is no peace for nuclear refugees who have been forcibly displaced from Fukushima, family refugees who cannot eat together due to sexual abuse, and Palestinian refugees who have been unable to return to their hometowns for more than 70 years due to the ego of the great powers.

Let’s carry a flag of the word “set you free (Greek ἐλευθερώ [eleuthero] <meaning ‘set free’>)” from “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. (John 8:32)”

I am looking for a warrior who will bring peace. The training begins with listening to the moaning in the disaster affected area.

*This sermon manuscript was proofread by Mr. Murata Jyuhachi, the executive board member of Kobe International Sustaining Organization, on the following week. I also grateful to the translator Tokudome Yumi and Sasaki Miwa of our office for editing the unclear points.

³⁰ 2018. J, Murata. *War and Peace of Bible*. Koyo Shobo. 201-202.

³¹ 2018. Y, Iwamura. *The Greatest Humanitarian Tragedy in History – the 2nd Syrian Volunteer Report*. Erasmus Institute of Peace Studies. February 17. 5-7.

“By the United States harmful rumor that the al-Assad administration uses chemical weapons such as sarin and its act goes against the Arab Spring in Syria, many of Japanese experts have understood that the al-Assad administration is carrying genocide (collective killing) to his nations. In the West European medias, they do unilateral reporting about the al-Assad administration, such as like “the evil dictatorship administration” and “cruel murderous administration”. However, it is true that the many of Syrian we met were supporting the al-Assad administration. I got an impression that the anti-government group was rather isolated.” (The text: Whether the al-Assad administration is the root of cause of all evil?)

Reference: 9) Kunieda, M. 2016. *The truth of Syria that TV and newspapers never report*. Asahi Bunko. p.14-15. 10) Fujimoto, T. 2015. *Workplace traveling – The Most Famous Japanese in Syria*. Gentosha Literary Publication. p.276. 11) Amaki, N. 2003. *Arab Torment from post of view of Lebanon. American Injustice*. Tembo. p.113. 12) 2018. *The Nihon Keizai Shinbun*. February 10. 13) Sasaki, Y. 1987. *You can't see the world without knowing Islam*. Yo-Yo Shyupan. p.67. 14) Amaki, N. 2003. *Arab Torment from post of view of Lebanon. American Injustice*. Tembo. p.108. 15) *ibid*. p.116. 16) Tsumura, K. 2015. *What did the Middle East correspondent see in Syria?* dZERO. p.85-86. 17) Tsutumi, M. 2012. *The government always tells lies*. KADOKAWA MAGAZINES. p.19.