

## Shinji

*Speak your thoughts to Kami as you live each day as a shinja in this age of Shinkon that is today.*

*Your emotions will gradually anchor; your kokoro is protected in the hands of Kami; and you are guided on the right path.*

*Gratitude for your existence will fill your thoughts.*

*This is the kokoro of gratitude.*

*To the Shinja*

*Do you see the people to whom you would like to honestly speak your gratitude?*

*Be the shinja who is grateful and always open about their gratitude to Kami, Chokushi, Daishin, kakari, shinja, family, relatives, and the people around you.*

*Learn the teachings together, share your gratitude, and be connected with the kokoro to give back.*

*This is when human beings learn love that is the truth, make it a part of themselves, and live a life of much meaning and purpose.*

*The kokoro (effort) to carry over your gratitude of this year to the coming year will guide the shinja to an era where there are no regrets.*

## Summary of the Shinji

This is the age of *Shinkon*. Thanks to *Chokushi* and *Daishin*, the path to salvation has opened. We live in an age when we find salvation through *Kibō no Michi* if we live and abide by the way of *Kami*, *Hotoke*, and *Hito no Michi*. If you keep this in mind, you'll be able to honestly look back on the state of your *kokoro* as you live each day as a *shinja*.

If you think you're a perfect human being, you will not be one with *Kami*. There's no such thing as a perfect human being. So when you greet *Kami* in your *kigan*, speak your gratitude with honesty, reflect on your shortcomings, and ask for protection so that you may continuously evolve as a human being.

What do you speak to *Kami* about every day? If your *kigan* is only about seeking to receive, it is not a *kigan* that is in sync with the era we live in—an era where if we abide by the path, the light shines and we are protected.

If you are a *shinja* who lives in the era of *Shinkon* and speaks their thoughts honestly to *Shinkon* each day, your *kokoro* will be anchored. If your emotions are anchored, you will not be consumed by your *jittai* and you will live merged with your *unmei*. You will live and walk the right path that merges with the *unmei* given to you.

All of us are born with different *jittai* and given an *unmei* to be useful in this world. If we walk the right path, we will live a life of no regrets without fail. Thus, give thanks for your existence.

Despite any difficulties or inconveniences that you may face, if you are someone who is needed, actively do what you can. That's when you'll begin to feel the meaning and purpose of being alive. We come into this world with *Kami's* love; we are allowed to live; and as we experience the joys of being useful, we begin to feel deeply grateful. Our *kokoro* is fulfilled the more we feel grateful.

*Kami* teaches us that we must give thanks to first *Kami*, then *Chokushi*, and *Daishin*. Since we're alive in this world, it's only natural to give thanks to *Kami*. This gratitude should also include your *kakari* and your fellow *shinja*—the *kakari* who stays in touch and encourages you to attend meetings and the *shinja* who is a fellow “classmate” in this environment of spiritual learning. But most of all, we must not forget to be grateful to our family members and relatives.

The family is the source of happiness. Our *kokoro* finds the greatest peace and comfort within the family and it's also the place where we evolve the most as human beings. If your home is filled with the gratitude of family members, just imagine how fulfilling your days would be. Furthermore, as long as we live in society, we are supported by countless people who have helped us to be who we are. Thus, it's important to be grateful for everything we have received.

Let's strive to be the person who learns the teachings, has gratitude in their *kokoro*, and deepens their ties to others with the *kokoro* to give back. It's about becoming someone who is loved by others and to always bear this in mind.

*Kami* tells us that human beings will live a life filled with much meaning and purpose when they know *Kami's* love and their *kokoro* evolves closer to *Kami's kokoro*. The more we grow closer to *Kami's kokoro*, the more we're able to live with the *kokoro* to give back. Your overflowing *kokoro* of gratitude connects to the coming year and we move closer to attaining a life without regrets.