

Shinji

Strive to be the shinja whose kokoro is supported by the principles now that you know how the kokoro should be based on life's principles.

All shinja, who live with this strong conviction and cherish the encounters they have each day, are in Kami's hands and the strength of their unmei will be drawn out; they will flow with the times (unmei) and live lives filled with meaning and purpose.

The state of the world (society) will continue to change.

The power (changes) of the times is at work to harmonize nature (the universe).

Live each day knowing the kokoro to give back to society and remain unconsumed by the changes.

Effort is needed to learn the teachings as a family and to build a family that lives by the principles.

When human beings live each day knowing the principles about the path, they become aware and deepen their understanding about the kokoro they should have in life.

All human beings, who live by the teachings, will realize the sacredness of life and strive to be the human being with the conviction to live and cherish their encounters with others (people).

To the Shinja

Treasure the teachings of the kokoro, the principles of life that Kami has given the world (society) through Shisha.

The teachings will guide the shinja to live without regrets.

The more the teachings are learned as a family, the kokoro of family members will coalesce ever deeper and the strengths of the unmei will be honed within the family.

When human beings live lives that merge with their unmei, all will give back to society and pass on the life they lived in their kokoro no michi.

Life is in Kami's hands—strive to be the person (human being) who completes their life journey knowing that the time spent living as a human being is precious.

Summary of the Shinji

○ **Live Life Supported by the Principles**

At the start of this new year, *Kami* teaches us what we must now be mindful of based on the *unmei* of the times, the movement of society, and the themes that we should address this year. They are about knowing the principles of life and the *kokoro* that we should have and to live our lives based on the principles.

To abide by the principles means to strive to live the right way of life as a human being within a society that revolves around the *unmei-jittai*. This way of life cannot be gained through knowledge. It must be learned from the *Shinji*. It is to grasp the principles through the teachings and make them the mainstay of your *kokoro*. Become the person who lives by the principles. That is this year's theme.

The *kokoro* that we should have as human beings is to strive to be as ethical and moral as possible. It is to live a way of life based on common sense in a society filled with self-centered and unethical people. If we practice the themes that *Kami* has given us, we will achieve results without fail.

○ **Move with the Flow of the Times and Gain Meaning and Purpose**

First, let's make the strong commitment to act on these themes—make the firm decision to elevate your way of life and to cherish your encounters with many people and things in your daily life. Just keeping this in mind will gradually bring out the strengths of the *unmei* *Kami* gave each of us. Our *unmei* shines when we abide by what *Kami* asks us to do.

Secondly, the times are undergoing great changes. These changes stem from the power of an era's *unmei*. It is a transformation that is headed toward harmony. When we move with this flow, we become useful and are supported by many people; and we're able to live lives filled with meaning and purpose.

○ **Do Not Be Consumed by the Changes, Give Back to Society**

Kami has given us these themes because society will continue to undergo major changes. To achieve harmony in nature, the power of an era's *unmei* is in motion. Power that goes beyond human understanding is moving toward harmonizing the universe. The divine providence of nature is the power to return to the original state in order to regain harmony when there is imbalance.

The universe does not only encompass the workings of nature, but myriad other aspects of the world. The world is changing to allow the universe to harmonize and the natural order to be maintained. It is returning to a stable environment and the way things should be. This is beyond the power of human beings and it is the movement of an era's *unmei*.

Thus, it's important not to be consumed by these changes and to forget the *kokoro* to give back to society. We have been allowed to live within this unified body called the universe. This is why we are conscious of being useful in our familiar surroundings and that is what creates meaning and purpose in life.

Changes occur whether we want them to or not; and we must live by the principles to remain unaffected by them. Learn the teachings, understand the principles, live and harmonize with everyone and everything around you. To harmonize, the *kokoro* to give back is vital.

- **Strive To Create a Family That Lives by the Principles**

Kami continues to encourage us to learn the teachings as a family and to create a family that lives by the principles for the coming year as well; and we must continue to strive to achieve this. Live by the teachings with family members and allow this way of life to spread and include relatives.

The foundations of *Kami's* teachings is the principle of *Kami, Hotoke, Hito no Michi*. It is to know the path that we must abide by as human beings and to live a way of life that does not go off this path. *Kaiun* is achieved when family members realize what the right *kokoro* is and deepen their understanding.

- **Cherish Your Encounters with Others**

Society today is filled with people who don't know what the right path is or who lack common sense. When the principles become the mainstay of our *kokoro*, we become aware of the truths about life and our understanding deepens. We become people who are refined in character, who have a sense of what is moral and ethical thus, we walk the right path.

In this way, people who live by the teachings know that life is precious and sacred. They see the value and worth of each person and cherish the encounters they have with others. Based on this strong belief, they will not look down on, hurt, or blame others. They also become someone who is able to guide the *kokoro* of those around them because they cherish each person they meet.

- **The Teachings Guide Us To a Life without Regrets**

Kami has repeatedly called out to us to treasure the principles of life, the teachings of the *kokoro* that have been given to us. Learn the teachings and perceive that which cannot be gained from knowledge, that which cannot be seen.

When the teachings become a part of us, we unconsciously begin to see the biases in what we see and hear, and this keeps us from being overwhelmed and swept away. They will guide each of us to live a life without regrets. Therefore, continue to learn the teachings and live each day without any regrets.

- **The Strength of the *Unmei* Is Honed in the Family**

When the family is in touch with the teachings, the *kokoro* of each family member comes together. Within this family environment, the *unmei* of each person is honed. The *unmei* is the strength to live life. When the teachings become a part of the family, relationships between husband and wife and parent and child are harmonious. Everyone's *kokoro* comes together and the *jittai* is corrected. The flower of happiness will blossom without fail.

When we are one with our *unmei*, we become useful and of benefit to many people. To become one with our *unmei* means that we will live a way of life that fits who we were born to be. We're able to give back to society and leave behind good elements in our *kokoro no michi*, the path of our *kokoro*—where you leave behind good elements that you may reap in the latter years of your life or are passed on to your children and grandchildren.

- **Life Is a Blessed Time to Live**

Life is in *Kami's* hands and to be alive is a blessed time for all human beings. There are many who complain that life's not enjoyable. That's because they don't see life for what it really is. All of us have been given an *unmei* from *Kami* and when we become one with our *unmei*, we're motivated to give back to society; and when we do, a wonderful life awaits us.

Our lifespan is part of our *unmei*, the unique and incomparable treasure gifted to each of us from *Kami*. Thus, it's important to live out our lifespan and to fulfill the role that was given to us. That's how we come to know the value of life. Hence *Kami* has given us the themes that we should strive to achieve this year so that we may become the kind of human being who fulfills their role and experiences the value of life.