

Gedatsu Teaching 6
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Translation by Rev. H. Taki

Gedatsu is to discard your ego, self-reflect, esteem integrity and diligently strive to improve yourself to attain peace of mind. This will promote the betterment of social conditions, lead you to the great path of humanity and cleanse society.

“Heaven generates virtue in me. Come what may, I fear not.”

-- Confucian saying

To know why one has received God’s blessing and has been granted from birth with the mission to save people’s hearts, is to know God’s will. If you do not know God’s will, you are not a man of virtue. Neither grudge heaven nor reproach others in order to cultivate and know your character.

- 1. Earnestly strive to learn the path of Gedatsu, or the Natural Law, and teach others without getting discouraged.*
- 2. All of creation – from birds and animals to insects and fishes – happily accept Heaven’s blessings and perform their activities without rest day and night.*
- 3. All things develop and mature naturally. It is evident that this is the Law of Nature.*
- 4. Look at nature! Nature, even now, says nothing. Furthermore, the transition of the seasons – spring, summer, autumn and winter – takes place without a fraction of an error.*
- 5. Without learning gratitude, it is impossible to achieve an orderly social system, establish family harmony or assure one’s existence.*
- 6. Gedatsu is communication between God and man. And this communication is realized through man’s sincere practice. It is to observe morality. It is not simply to utter empty words or to repeat sacred scriptures. The truth is, in order for us to be free from hardships and suffering, we must become aware of the Universal Life Force by actively endeavoring to elevate ourselves with all our heart and soul.*
- 7. There is no religion that has no prayer. Even in the absence of a clear doctrine, as long as prayer exists, religion lives.*
- 8. A true religion has a genuine sense of devotion, even if it has no formal doctrine. Therefore, the history of prayer is that of the improvement of religion.*
 - Human Nature is the manifestation of Heaven’s Will.*
 - The Path is to comply with Human Nature.*
 - Religious teaching is to practice the Path.*

The lack of understanding of the above-mentioned has caused clashes between fatalism and liberalism. However, we should not be involved in this debate. Rather, we should self-reflect and study the path through practice. This is Gedatsu. In the past, people practiced asceticism, such as the denial of rest and food, to learn religion. Gedatsu is not just to think about doctrines or talk on theories. It must be actually practiced. This is why I say Gedatsu is sacred. Gedatsu study and practice is the best way for your spiritual awareness.

Commentary on Gedatsu Teaching 6

By Rev. H. Taki

Gedatsu Kongo explained here the basic teaching of Gedatsu: the path of humanity according to the Law of Nature. When one deeply perceives that one is allowed to exist by God and receives infinite blessings from all beings in the universe, one will be aware of his/her duty as a human, and will attain true peace and happiness.

First, Gedatsu Kongo stated that Gedatsu is the path of self-reflection and self-renunciation. As I explained previously, our views are limited and self-centered, so we are usually not aware of this. This is the basic cause of our worries and troubles in life. Therefore, if you want to be happy, you must have an inner eye of introspection and perceive egoism within yourself. When you truly perceive your egoism within, it will disappear. Self-reflection and self-renunciation, therefore, are essential for our peace and happiness.

“Heaven generates virtues in me. Come what may, I fear not.” This is a Confucius saying. Huan T’ui, Minister of War in Sung of ancient China, had hostility toward Confucius and tried to kill him. At that time, Confucius stated those words to his disciples, meaning: “I am allowed to exist in this world by Heaven’s Will. I have a mission from God. Therefore, even if such a man as Huan T’ui tries to kill me, it is impossible, because my life is bestowed by God.”

God grants us life – as well as our life’s purpose

By quoting these words, Gedatsu Kongo taught us that we are all allowed to exist by God. Everyone has a mission or duty given by God. We have to understand this. This duty is, in essence, to work for the salvation of mankind and world peace through our daily duties. When we perceive this, we can realize a meaningful life.

However, there are seeming inequalities in this world. Some people have material wealth and enjoy prosperity. Others have no money and live in misery. By such appearances, you may feel that God doesn’t treat people equally. But this is not so. Everyone has his/her mission or duty on earth. You should understand this and sincerely endeavor to do your best in your duties without begrudging God or reproaching others. You then will be able to live life fully and attain true happiness.

Gedatsu Kongo outlines the essential points of Gedatsu study, as follows.

1. Study and practice Gedatsu regularly and sincerely each day. Do not study for yourself alone, but share Gedatsu with your friends. You will then be blessed by Heaven with peace and happiness.

2. When you see Nature, you realize that all creation, including birds, animals, insects and fishes, live happily while performing their roles. We humans also should realize our own mission on earth, which was bestowed by Heaven. This is the path of happiness.

3. When we observe the seasonal changes and natural phenomena, we can understand that Nature makes everything change without doing anything. We humans are also allowed to exist by this great Nature.

4. Nature speaks not a word – but it is working constantly and accurately, making everything change. This is God’s Will.

5. We humans are allowed to exist by Nature. Therefore, if we go against Natural Law, we cannot survive. Learn the spirit of gratitude, the path of humanity, and live according to this path. This will lead you to true happiness, family harmony, society’s prosperity and world peace.

6. Gedatsu is to be aware of the Will of God, and to live daily according to God’s Will. This is the path of man’s true happiness. You must deeply understand you are allowed to exist by God, receiving infinite blessings from everyone. Our present life is possible because of the guidance and protection of God, ancestors and other spirits. If you perceive this fact, you will appreciate their blessings. Gedatsu Kongo then says, “This communication is realized through man’s sincere practice.” If you have no sincerity, even if you chant holy scriptures hundreds of times, it is just like a frog’s croaking. Such chanting of sacred words never touches the divine spirits. Only your sincerity will allow you to live life fully.

7. The essence of religion is in prayer. Religion is not in holy scriptures, doctrines, or religious rituals. It is your sincere heart searching for God. Prayer is not brought about by doctrines or rituals. Prayer is the expression of one’s true heart.

8. This is a repetition of point 7. Religion is not in such forms as doctrines or rituals. Rather, it is in your genuine sense of devotion and sincerity.

Following is a quotation from an ancient Chinese book about Confucian philosophy called *Moderation*. “Human Nature is the manifestation of Heaven’s Will. The Path is to comply with Human Nature. Religious teaching is to practice the Path.” These words speak for themselves.

In the last paragraph of Teaching 6, Gedatsu Kongo talks about fatalism and liberalism. Fatalism is a view that human life is totally determined by something beyond human will, such as God, *karma*, fate, etc. Liberalism is, in contrast, a view that man’s free will determines everything in his life. While these opposing views have been widely debated, Gedatsu Kongo urges us not to be involved in this debate, but to actually practice the path in our daily life. Gedatsu is not just empty thinking – it is actual practice. Through our sincere practice of the Gedatsu path, we will be able to attain true peace of mind and spiritual enlightenment. This is the way to true happiness for everyone.