

The Sacred, Mysterious Power of Water

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Good morning, everyone.

There is a saying: "We never know the worth of water 'till the well is dry."

At this time of severe water shortage in California, we offer today, on behalf of all the residents of Los Angeles County, our thanksgiving prayer to water deities, Benzaiten, Ryuo-jin and Suirei-jin. It is an honor for us to do so.

Let us give thanks for the blessings of water and cultivate our minds to align with the will of God.

Benzaiten is a water deity. In Japan, water deities are usually classified into three kinds, depending on the nature and activity of the water.

In the pond on the Sacramento Church grounds, three water deities are enshrined: "Amehachidai Ryuoujin," "Amegoshiki-Benzaiten," and "Suirei-jin." Although their names differ, they are all deities controlling water.

Gedatsu Kongo explained the divine realm and its relationship with the natural world in this way: "Behind all natural phenomena, there are varied and complex organizational activities of the divine world and the spiritual world. In mountains, rivers, trees, plants, man and animals, there is a deity governing each. And each deity works under the Supreme God, which commands the entire universe."

In other words, according to the Law of the Supreme God of the Universe, there are many deities controlling each natural phenomenon. Among them, the water deity Benzaiten has the primary role of controlling the activity of water on this earth.

Furthermore, there are many hierarchies of numerous spirits working under the water deity. Each water spirit has a different status in the hierarchy, as well as a different function relating to varying manifestations of water.

Among these, in Japan, dragon and serpent entities are recognized as subordinate spiritual beings of the water deity. Liquor and eggs are considered to be favored by them and are, therefore, traditionally presented to them as offerings.

Benzaiten is the deity controlling water, but at the same time, it is the deity supporting the life of all creatures.

Water circulates around and above the earth. Water falls from the sky as rain, permeates through the soil and enriches all living things. Moisture from the earth then rises to the sky as vapor, becoming clouds and beginning the cycle again.

Water purifies everything on earth and enriches all living things. Thus, the role of the water deity is essential for all life activity on earth.

Water circulates in our bodies, as well. We consume water, which enriches all our cells and drains waste materials from our bodies. We then take water into our bodies again. In this manner, water purifies our bodies – inside and outside.

We may think that we know water well. In reality, however, water – the foundation of life and the most common of liquids – is really a mystery. Even scientists can't explain how water works.

Did you know that if you place a pot of hot water and a pot of cold water in the freezer, the hot water will freeze before the cold water?

Water seems benign, but it can dissolve rocks and metals into invisible grains, just as it dissolves salt and sugar.

Within sea water are melted more than 80 elements which created the earth.

We humans, as well as other creatures, unconsciously use water's "power to dissolve." Our blood, carrying life-nourishing nutrients and oxygen, eventually is expelled as waste material. Plants, too, decompose. Thus, animal and plant waste is dissolved in water to become the source of nourishment for new generations of animals and plants.

A doctor in Japan performed a series of experiments, after which he claimed: "Water has the power to memorize." The doctor observed the physical effects of words, prayers, music and environment on the crystalline structure of water. He found that when water crystals were exposed to beautiful melodies, kind words and loving voices, they became lovely, symmetrical forms. When exposed to negative sounds and words, the crystals grew deformed.

The same results occurred when the water was placed in a bottle and positive or negative words were written on the bottle. When words like "thanks" or "love" were written on the bottle, lovely crystals formed. Deformed crystals were formed when words like "bad" or "hell" were written on the bottle.

It seems that water is sensitive to the vibrations of our thoughts and words.

As we pray for our ancestors, the Amacha is listening to our recitation of Hannyashingyo, receiving our positive vibrations. In turn, the Amacha transmits the sincerity of our prayers to spirits to heal their sufferings.

I labeled each bottle of water with the word "Appreciation" and offered it to the water deities. The water received Benzaiten's sacred energy and the vibration of our thanksgiving, so it must be purified.

After closing prayer, please take a bottle of water and an egg as "Osagari," which are holy offerings from our altar.

Thank you very much and God bless you.