

Vision of Praise

December 2021

From the editor

This month, let us share a moving testimony, "The Lord Jesus Answers You" by Mimi Fujii, a staff worker, together with "God Answers Our Prayer" by Mitsuko from the White Dove II.

The Lord Jesus Answers You

Mimi Fujii

The new heavenly praise song "Alleluia in the Starry Night" was given from the famous art work, known as "The Starry Night" by Vincent Van Gogh.

♪ *In the starrynight,
in its stillness,
my heart adores the Lord,
the Creator.
Alleluia Alleluia*



When I heard this praise song for the first time, I remembered my childhood, and I was deeply healed.

I was born and grew up in Okinawa, a southern island of Japan. When I was in the fourth grade, my parents divorced. My mother took my little sister and left for the Unites States. My heart broke because I couldn't see them anymore.

I felt so lonely that I often went to the roof top gazing at the stars alone. The stars are so beautiful in Okinawa and I

remember the gentle breeze wiped my tears. My deep sorrow of loneliness was comforted by looking at the stars.

I was all by myself on the roof, yet I felt some mysterious peace surrounded me.

And hearing the praise, “Alleluia in the Starry Night,” I felt the same peace in the midst of the resounding tunes. I was wrapped by the mysterious peace that I had felt in my childhood.

Now let us see the painting, “The Starry Night,” because its resounding tune of “Alleluia” opened my eyes to see the life that he had painted in it.



There are the stars and the moon, around which he painted shining lights by round brush strokes, and the blowing wind as if you can see where it comes and goes. And there are cypress trees in the front, and in the back mountains and hills also moving with the wind. It seems to me that the moon and the stars, trees and all creation are resonating to one another in his painting.

Also I found a small star by the cypress trees. This star looks shining more brightly than other stars, as if Gogh pointed it out and said, “Look at that star!” I thought of the star appeared on Christmas Eve, guiding the three wise men to the place where Jesus was born, saying, “Let’s go and worship Jesus together.”

Then I also found the church building in the center of his

painting. When I discovered it, I thought that Gogh might have seen that the moon, the stars and the hills, the trees, and people in the church, are all praising the Lord together.

I felt what Gogh expressed might be what we call Cosmic Worship, where everything on earth and in heaven worship the Lord together being as one!

I found the joy of the Cosmic Worship in his painting. Then I felt my saddest childhood memory was healed and it changed into joy of worshipping the Lord together with everything He created. I found that I have been invited to Cosmic Worship in which all creations is praising the Creator since I was a child. And knowing that, my loneliness has been completely healed. I found that I was not all alone at that time, but I was worshipping the Lord together with the moon and the stars.

Seven years after my parents divorced, I also left for the United States to study Art. “Starry Night” was my most favorite painting but I had never imagined that I would be healed so deeply through its resounding tune.

This was more than enough healing for me, yet the Lord had given another praise song called “Alleluia Always” through Mitsuko while she was reading my testimony of the healing of childhood memory.

♪ *The Lord Jesus answers you,*

“Always, I am always with you, with you, My child.”

When I first heard this praise, I almost cried, because the Almighty God who created everything is calling me, “My child.”

And I was also so shocked by the first line which said,

“The Lord Jesus answers you,” because when I became a Christian, the first scripture given to me was from Matthew Chapter 7 verse 7.

Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find.
Knock, and it will be opened to you. (Matthew 7:7 NAS)

Ask, and it will be given to you. I realized that my heart was asking God, “I want the love that will never be lost, I want a family that will never leave me.” And 40 years later, now the Lord really answered me. Indeed, the Lord Jesus answers you.

Because I am here to worship the Lord in God’s family, Kohitsuji no Mure (meaning a “flock of praise”). For me Kohitsuji no Mure church is not the only the church you go to worship every Sunday as routine, but it is my family, the Body of Christ, God’s family which will never be lost. It is where I can be just as I am, and worship Jesus in spirit and truth.

When my biological family broke up, my deep loneliness was not healed by people’s nice word or sympathy. What comforted me and healed me was Cosmic Worship, where all creation praise God together. It’s my true family, my true house where I can receive peace no matter what may happen.

Now each time I sing the praise, “Alleluia Always,” ♪ *Always, I am always with you, My child.* ♪ I remember the conversation between my father and my younger sister Minako.

As I mentioned in the beginning, my parents divorced, and my mother left for the United States with Minako who were only five at that time. And in the year 2000, I invited my father to visit the United States from Okinawa. Then he met Minako for the first time in 26 years. I will never forget their conversation.

Well, I sat between my father and my sister. Then my father asked me who was sitting next to him in Japanese, “I have something to tell her, so please translate it into English for me.” Since my sister grew up in the States, she understood little Japanese.

He said, “Because of my divorce, I had to let go of you when you were little. I felt guilty all this time that I couldn’t raise you. I was always thinking about you and I wanted to apologize to you.”

Minako replied to him with a smile, “I am very happy because I have met Jesus. I have never felt alone because Jesus was with me always.”

My father said, “I had this heavy burden that I could not carry. But now for the first time my heart is lifted up. God has been always with you! I thank Jesus from the bottom of my heart. I’m happier than anyone else. Thank You.”

The Lord healed not only me but also the deep sorrow of my father and my sister.

My families, in Okinawa and the United States both believed Jesus and got baptized and now join the Sunday worship held at the Church of Wind through live streaming. The family which was broken once is now together forever as God’s family.

I thank the Lord who is always with us. Amen.

From Friday Worship Service on September 3, 2021

God Answers Our Prayer

Mitsuko

God exists and answers our prayer. This reality will change our life and the way we live as if we were raised from death to life. The greatest transformation in our life will take place when we encounter God and know that God exists. It will not be possible otherwise.

Pray to the Lord. Turn your heart to God. When you pray alone to the invisible God, you will find that your prayer is not a monologue. Try it once, and you will know. I did. Especially when you pray in the name of the Lord, you will see it.

When we know the Lord is Jesus Christ, we will find that our prayer is answered by simply saying “Lord.” If we do not, it is a chance to realize that His answer is beyond our intellectual understanding. I believe He wants us to know that He is not confined to man’s understanding or intellect.

When I say, “My prayer was answered,” those reluctant to believe in God may react, “How silly it is to believe coincidence as God’s doing! I do not want to give up my intelligence.” I myself used to be like that.

However, if things happen not by coincidence but by the power beyond our comprehension, don’t you want to know it? I believe that man is so created that he may desire to know the mystery of God.

If we sincerely wish to see things beyond coincidence, I believe we can. This is my conviction, because God never fails to answer our prayers. When we cannot see it, this simply means that it is not yet visible to our eyes. I can say so without

hesitation, because I have seen that God surely answers prayers.

The Lord responds to our prayers from wishing a small thing to wanting to know the meaning of life.

Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (John 14:13)

I am happy if I see His immediate response, and even if not, I can believe and wait, because I know He exists and answers prayers.

*from "The White Dove" Vol. II chapter 1
"Drawn into the World of Prayer" by Mitsuko*

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