

LESSON NOTES

Japanese Children's Songs #10

Tōryanse

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KANJI

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KANA

1. とおりゃんせとおりゃんせ
2. ここはどこのほそみちじゃ
3. てんじんさまのほそみちじゃ
4. ちょっととうしてくだしゃんせ
5. ごようのないものとおしゃせぬ
6. このこのななつのおいわいに おふだをおさめにまいります

CONT'D OVER

7. いきはよいよいかえりはこわい
8. こわいながらも とおりゃんせとおりゃんせ

ROMANIZATION

1. Tōryanse tōryanse
2. Koko wa doko no hosomichi ja
3. Tenjin-sama no hosomichi ja
4. Chotto tōshite kudashanse
5. Go yō no nai mono tōshasenu
6. Kono ko no nanatsu no oiwai ni o-fuda o osame ni mairimasu
7. Iki wa yoiyoi kaeri wa kowai
8. Kowai nagara mo tōryanse tōryanse

ENGLISH

1. Pass! pass!
2. "This narrow road, where does it go?"
3. "This narrow road is the Road of the God Tenjin."

CONT'D OVER

4. "I beg you, allow me to pass for a moment."
5. "Those who have no business here must not pass."
6. "Having made a vow to the God Tenjin for this child's 7th year, I want to pass to present a talisman."
7. "Going, all will be well for you; but coming back you will have reason to be afraid."
8. "If you're ready for that, Pass! pass!"

VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
細道	ほそみち	hosomichi	narrow road
通す	とおす	tōsu	to let someone pass, to make way for
ご用	ごよう	go-yō	business
お札	おふだ	o-fuda	a strip of paper or small wooden tablet often considered talismanic
おさめる	おさめる	osameru	to dedicate, to make an offering
参る	まいる	mairu	(hum) to go, to come

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>細道を抜けて、広い平原にたどり着いた。 <i>Hosomichi o nukete hiroi heigen ni tadoritsuita.</i></p> <p>I went through the narrow road, and finally arrived at a wide plain.</p>	<p>荷物を持っている人を、先に通した。 <i>Nimotsu o motte iru hito o saki ni tōshita.</i></p> <p>We let people who have luggage pass through first.</p>
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<p>ご用がございましたら、呼び鈴でお知らせください。</p> <p><i>Go-yō ga gozaimashitara yobirin de oshirase kudasai.</i></p> <p>Please ring the bell if you need anything.</p>	<p>お札を買いに、神社へ行った。</p> <p><i>O-fuda o kai ni jinja e itta.</i></p> <p>I went to the shrine to buy a talisman.</p>
<p>合格祈願のため、絵馬を神社に納めてきた。</p> <p><i>Gōkaku kigan no tame ema o jinja ni osamete kita.</i></p> <p>I went and left a wooden plaque at a shrine as a prayer for passing the school entrance examination.</p>	<p>まもなく、電車が参ります。ご注意ください。</p> <p><i>Mamonaku, densha ga mairimasu. Go-chūi kudasai.</i></p> <p>The train is now approaching. Please be careful.</p>

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is the Japanese Children's Song とおりゃんせ (Tōryanse).

This song is a very old song that people claim was written in the Edo period. It is a song that children sing while playing a game, which is similar to the game of "London Bridge." It goes like this: first, two people stand face to face and form an arch with their arms. Then, other people go through under the arch while singing this song. Then, when the music stops, the two people who are making the arch put down their arms and capture the person passing beneath.

There are many variations of the interpretation of the lyrics of this song. The outline of the most popular interpretation is as follows: This song is about parents taking their child to a shrine because the child has turned seven years old, and they are asking guards of the shrine to let them through. Something important to understand about this song is that turning seven had a very important meaning in the past because many children didn't make it to that age a long time ago. So, in many areas, people used to make a talisman right after they had a baby and then return it to a shrine when their child turned seven years old. It also means that the children must live without the magic power of the talisman after age seven.

とおりゃんせとおりゃんせ (Tōryanse tōryanse)

The modern Japanese version of this line is とおりなさい, which is the imperative form of

とおる and means "pass through." This is thought to be a line a guard of the shrine said.

ここはどこ細道じゃ (*Koko wa doko no hosomichi ja*)

The modern Japanese version of this line is **ここはどこ細道ですか**, which means "Where does this narrow road go to?" In this line, we use **じゃ** to form a question in the old Japanese. This is a line the parents say to ask the shrine guard where this narrow road goes to, just to make sure that they can get to the shrine using this road.

天神様の細道じゃ (*Tenjin-sama no hosomichi ja*)

The modern Japanese version of this line is **天神様の細道だ**, which means "This narrow road is the Road of the God Tenjin." So, in this line, we use **じゃ** to form a statement, which is different from the usage the previous line, where the parents used it to ask a question. The guard says this line as an answer to the question the parents ask in the previous line.

天神 is one of the Shinto Gods. **様** is a honorific name suffix we add to the name of someone of a higher rank than you to show your respect. So people often call gods using **様** to show their respect.

ちょっと通してくださいんせ (*Chotto tōshite kudashanse*)

The modern Japanese version of this line is **ちょっと通してください**, which means "please let us pass through." So, this is the line the parents of a child say when they ask a guard of a shrine to let them through.

ご用のないものとおしゃせぬ (*Go yō no nai mono tōshasenu*)

We can read this line as **用事のないものはとおさない**, which literally means "We don't let people who have no business here pass through." **ご用** is the same as **用事 (ようじ)**, which means "business" or "something to do." The **ご** of **ご用** is an honorific suffix. **もの** means "person." So **ご用のないもの** means "a person who doesn't have any business here." The guard says this line telling the parents that they cannot go through if they don't have any business at the shrine.

この子の七つのお祝いに お札をおさめに参ります (*Kono ko no nanatsu no oiwai ni o-fuda o osame ni mairimasu*)

This line is the answer from the parents telling the guard what they want to do at the shrine. この子の七つのお祝い means "in celebration of this child reaching age seven." お札 is "a talisman." おさめに is the formation of the particle *ni* + the *masu* stem of the verb おさめる. おさめる has many meanings, and among them is that of "to place or return something to a shrine." This particle *ni* indicates the object of an action. So お札をおさめに means "in order to place a talisman in the shrine." 参ります is the humble form of 行く, meaning "to go."

行きはよいよい帰りはこわい (*Iki wa yoiyoi kaeri wa kowai*)

We can read this line as 行きはよいが、帰りはこわい. 行き means "the way to the shrine," and 帰り means "the way back from the shrine." よい means "good" and こわい means "scary." So this literally means "You'll be fine on the way to the shrine, but you'll be scared on the way back from the shrine." This is referring to the fact that the parents leave the talisman at the shrine, and so the way back from the shrine without its protection is scary.

こわいながらもとおりゃんせとおりゃんせ (*Kowai nagara mo tōryanse tōryanse*)

こわいながらも literally means "while you feel scared." We use ながら to connect two clauses that have contrasting meanings. This も is a particle for emphasis. So this line literally means "Pass through while you feel scared."