



# The Caravan

CaravanFriends.org



## Tancho

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[TAN cho] /noun/Tancho is the Japanese name for the red-crowned crane

The oldest member of the East Asian caravan, Tancho is mature, wise, refined, sensible, thoughtful, calm, loyal, and unruffled. In his culture older people are respected for their wisdom and experience, so he acts as a teacher and advisor to the younger ones. In a culture that frowns on displays of anger or “hot-heartedness,” his only sign of anger or excitement is a brightening of the red patch on his head. From time-to-time he uses dance—somewhat resembling martial arts—to express his emotions, or to reinforce his lessons to the younger members of the caravan.

Only a very small percentage of people in his homeland of Japan have made the decision to become Christians, but Tancho became friends with Japanese Christians in his home city more than two decades ago. He has devoted the rest of his life to sharing stories about Jesus with those He meets. He has earned the respect of others for his knowledge of the Bible and his practical application of the Bible’s teachings. He has spent so much time studying the Bible that he now has to wear glasses – which only adds to his wise-looking countenance.

**Japan.** Japan, the land of the “Rising Sun,” is sometimes compared in size and shape to the state of California. Situated in the northern part of the Pacific Ocean, Japan is composed of 6,852 large and small islands. It has the world’s tenth largest population and its second largest economy. Though many East Asian countries restrict the free practice of religion, Japan allows its inhabitants complete freedom to choose and practice the religion of their choice. Nonetheless, Japan remains one of the world’s least evangelized countries.

**Shinto.** The Shinto religion incorporates practices from traditional Japanese culture. Actions are more important than words in this religion. This religion combines ancestor worship, worship of various false gods, and worship of nature among other things. Japanese people may believe and practice the Shinto religion while also practicing the Buddhist religion. Shinto does not exclude the practice of other religions.



**Crane.** Red-crowned cranes are renowned for their beautiful courtship dances. The red-crowned crane is an important symbol to the people of Japan and other Asian countries. It typically represents long life, peace, happiness and fidelity. The red patch of skin on this crane’s head becomes brighter when it is angry or excited.

## Favorite Verse

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:16 (NIV)