

The Man Who Overcomes Comes with a New Name

John Kirkley
February 28, 2014

When Unification Church members witness, we are armed with Divine Principle, as well as our own faith, zeal and personal experiences with True Parents. Still, we may be asked, “Yes, but where can we find mention of Sun Myung Moon in the Bible?”

We know that we cannot find him mentioned before the Gospels, because all revelation until the advent of Jesus Christ of Bethlehem and Nazareth was to be fulfilled by Jesus himself. We also know that John the Baptist was supposed to be the last prophet to foretell the coming of the Messiah (Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-8, Luke 3:1-18, John 1:19-28), as well as the first disciple, for John saw the Spirit descend on Jesus like a dove after the baptism (Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22) and “testified that this is the Son of God” (John 1:29-34).

As the last of the prophets, John was unique, first because he it was his mission to baptize Jesus, second because he was thus the only one to meet Jesus face-to-face, and third because he had the further mission to become the first disciple ... obviously! After all, if one is expecting a messiah to come and then meets him, he should of course follow him. But we also know from Divine Principle that John failed in this next important mission, that his pride and insistence on going his own way led to his rapid demise and beheading, and that this was the initial cause of the failure of Jesus’ mission to conduct the Blessing and establish the foundation and beginnings of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, which in turn necessitated the Second Advent.

Jesus Himself began to predict that future advent, “when the Son of Man comes in His glory” (Matthew 25:31-41). He said clearly that not even He knew of the time, but warned believers to be vigilant, to “watch and pray” (Matthew 24:36-25:46, Mark 13:32-37, Luke 21:34-36).

Jesus shares many things with his disciples during the Last Supper, saying “I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you” (John 13:15), giving “a new commandment ... that you should love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34), talking about His “words” and His “works” as not His own, but coming from the Father (John 14:10), urging them repeatedly to “keep My commandments” (John 14:15) and to “bear witness” (John 15:27), telling them clearly of the coming of the Holy Spirit (John 16:5-15), and exhorting them to “be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

After his resurrection, Jesus appears to many and teaches them that “‘all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures” (Luke 24:44-45). He commissions them to witness: “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” (John 20:21; see also Matthew 28:18-20 & Mark 16:14-18). Genesis 2:7 tells of what I term the “dual creation” of man as both body and spirit: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being.” In a brief passage reminiscent of this first creation, Jesus “breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy spirit’” (John 20:22).

How, then, can we answer the question, “Who is the messiah to come, the Lord of the Second Advent?” In short, we know him by his words and his works, for the tree is known by its fruit (Matthew 12:33); and Jesus says, “whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother” (Mark 3:35, Matthew 12:50, Luke 8:21). Nevertheless, these are general pronouncements, which could apply to many people. What can we find that is more specific?

The clear prophecy of the person of the Second Advent is hidden in the Book of REVELATION, chapters 2 & 3, in Jesus’ messages to the seven churches.

(1) TO EPHESUS: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God” (2:7). The first sentence here refers to spiritual perception, as when Elisha prayed that God open the eyes of his servant Gehazi, so he could see the heavenly hosts opposing the army of the Syrians (2 Kings 6:8-18) or when Peter, James & John witnessed the Transfiguration of Jesus and the presence of Moses and Elijah (Matthew 17:1-13, Mark 9:2-13, Luke 9:28-36). But the second sentence refers to “he who overcomes.” Now Jesus has already told us that He Himself has overcome the world (John 16:33), so this new revelation must be referring to someone else, and the Tree of Life was denied to Adam.

(2) “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (2:10). This, of course, is probably referring specifically to members of the church of SMYRNA; but it could also refer to believers through the ages who have

suffered terribly; and passages such as this must have given great comfort to Sun Myung Moon as he endured his own years of suffering. But what follows is even more important: “He who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.” We are beginning to see that hidden within these seven specific messages to specific churches are general promises to persons who are spiritually open, and these messages contain clear promises to those who overcome.

(3) TO PERGAMOS: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it” (2:17). This one is especially important, for whereas many Christian saints and martyrs from the time of the writing of REVELATION to the present have overcome many trials, tribulations, sufferings and tortures, persevering even unto death, it seems that just one man will receive that white stone and “a new name,” so the Lord of the Second Advent cannot be Jesus, whose name we already know.

(4) TO THYATIRA: “And he who overcomes and keeps my works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations — ‘ He shall rule them with a rod of iron. / They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels.’ — as I also have received from my Father; and I will give him the morning star. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (2:26-29). This reference to “the morning star” is pertinent, as we consider that while the man Jesus spent his life in a limited part of the Earth, His Gospel has spread to all nations and places and peoples; but Sun Myung Moon himself traveled the world, spoke a consistent message for almost 70 years, and his followers have witnessed in all nations.

(5) TO SARDIS: “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (3:5-6). We know that Koreans traditionally wear white clothes; but the white clothes here are symbolic of purity and could refer to any men or women who lead lives of dedication, service, sacrifice and devotion.

(6) TO PHILADELPHIA: “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (3:12-13). Of course, while many might “overcome” in some way and be made “a pillar in the temple,” it seems to me that this second reference to a “new name” underscores the fact that these messages are to be received and incarnated in just one man, while many of us will be able to understand the passage in this way.

(7) TO LAODICEA: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (3:19-20). This first part clearly opens this door to many faithful, but there’s more: “To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (3:21-22). In this latter part, Jesus seems to refer to just one man, not many ... a partner, an equal, a younger brother, someone to come with a new name, the Lord of the Second Advent.