

THE
SPIRITUAL LEADER

ONE OF THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY MOMENTS OF MY CAREER

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NO OTHER INDIVIDUAL OUTSIDE of my immediate family has had a greater impact on my adult life than Rev. Sun Myung Moon. It is surprising that this should be the case. We were born in different countries, the products of very different cultures. When I was a student preparing for the rabbinate at the Jewish Theological Seminary, it would have been impossible to imagine that Rev. Moon could have had such a profound effect on me.

When I first met Rev. Moon, I already had an established reputation as a theologian and an historian of religion whose works had been translated into a number of foreign languages. My views on theology were and remain very different than his. Rev. Moon always treated me with sophisticated understanding and very great courtesy.

I was a Fellow at the National Humanities Institute at Yale University when I received an invitation to participate in the 1976 International Conference on the Unity of the Science (ICUS) in Washington, D.C. I had become curious about Rev. Moon and the Unification Movement. One very powerful Yale professor told me

that my attendance would have a negative effect on my academic career. I do not take well to that sort of threat. I resolved to attend ICUS and asked Dr. Betty Rubenstein to come with me.

The conference was one of the best we had ever attended. I took part in multi-disciplinary sessions with world-class scholars and scientists in every field. I conversed with several Nobel Laureates, including Sir John Eccles and Eugene Wigner.

Naturally, I was most curious about Rev. Moon. It was clear to me that he is a man of extraordinary spiritual charisma and that, he is the commanding presence in any gathering at which he is present. I especially remember his singing several songs in Korean. Although I did not understand the words, the force of his personality came through. I also noted that he had a strong sense of humor.

I especially appreciated Rev. Moon's commitment to the fight against Communism. From his own first-hand, personal experience and out of his religious convictions, he understood how tragic a political and social blight that movement had been. I had been in East and West Berlin the week the Berlin Wall was erected in August 1961 and had visited communist Poland in 1965. Unfortunately, many of my liberal academic colleagues did not understand the full nature of the threat as did Rev. Moon. I was impressed with the sophistication of Rev. Moon's anti-communism. He understood communism's evil, but he also stood ready to meet with communist leaders such as Mikhail Gorbachev and Kim Il Sung in the hope of changing or moderating their views.

In the spring of 1977, I was invited to offer prayer at the first graduation ceremony of the Unification Theological Seminary in Barrytown, New York. Immediately before the event, I was walking down a flight of stairs and noticed Rev. Moon looking out of a window in what seemed to be meditation. I did not want to disturb him. I did not think he knew who I was.

Watching me pass by him, he later told me that he thought to himself, "Rubenstein has guts!" Apparently, he took my failure to introduce myself—it certainly was not a willful refusal—as a token of a certain measure of independence and courage on my part.

There have been many occasions since when he told me that he thought that I have "guts." I hope that I have proven worthy of that opinion.

After giving millions of dollars to support American religious, cultural and charitable institutions, Rev. Moon was found guilty of tax evasion and sentenced to a term at Danbury Federal Prison in Connecticut. I visited him there. He was neatly attired in a khaki shirt and slacks, relaxed, and radiated good cheer. As always, his charisma dominated our visit. All of us felt that we were his guests, whether we met him at his home, at a conference reception, or in Danbury.

He tended to single me out during his speeches, sometimes challenging me on a religious idea, sometimes asking my opinion. On one occasion, he asked me before 2,000 people, "Do you love God?" It was a hard question for me to answer. Simply to say, "Yes, of course, I love God!" would have been too easy. I am too mindful of the awesome Majesty of Divinity to give an easy answer.

When he asked me a question in the Church or in the presence of so many people, it was especially difficult for me to answer. I was his guest and did not want to express a contrary opinion. He knew me very well. Perhaps, it was his way of determining whether I still had "guts." I knew that he did not expect or want me ever to say anything simply to please him. He would have lost respect for me if I had. I, on the other hand, never wished to be in any way discourteous. My challenge was to express my own views truthfully and respectfully. I understood that his singling me out was a token of affection and respect. I understood the honor that he bestowed upon me in these encounters and I returned his affection and respect with much gratitude.

Rev. Moon told me that he would have a very important task for me. I was puzzled by the remark. I had already served as President of the Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA) in the U.S. and as a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of *The Washington Times*. Several years later he entrusted me with the leadership of the University of Bridgeport. The leadership of the University of Bridgeport was the most important task that he gave to me.

I am enormously indebted to Rev. Moon for entrusting me with the leadership of the University of Bridgeport. Before Rev. Moon rescued the university from certain collapse and bankruptcy in 1992, the institution had experienced the longest and the bitterest faculty strike in the history of American higher education. Once it became known that the University and PWPA had entered into a partnership, both the press and an important segment of public opinion in Connecticut vehemently criticized the partnership agreement. All private colleges and universities in New England are publicly regulated. Had there been a violation of PWPA's agreement to maintain the non-sectarian character of the University, the school would have quickly lost its accreditation. Unfortunately, some of the critics preferred to see the school close its doors rather than succeed in its partnership with PWPA.

Thanks to Rev. Moon's commitment to the university, it did not fail. Enrollment and revenue have increased every year since 1995. When I became President in 1995 there were 1,900 students. I left office at the end of 1999 with 3,000 students enrolled and with a much modernized and improved campus plant. To date, Rev. Moon and his disciples have committed over \$110 million to the university.

On August 24, 1992, I was given the honor of responding to the address that Rev. Moon delivered at the Little Angels School in Seoul, Korea before an assembly that included religious leaders, philosophers, scientists, political leaders, media leaders and government officials from all over the world. I did not have occasion to see the address until a day or two before the occasion. When I did see it, I realized that it was perhaps the most important public address Rev. Moon had ever given. In it he proclaimed his understanding of himself as Lord of the Second Advent. The occasion was too solemn for me to say anything simply to please him, nor did I think he wanted me to.

The nature of Rev. Moon's calling is a matter of faith. I neither wanted to say anything that would mar the solemnity of the occasion, especially for his disciples, nor did I want to misrepresent my

own religious commitments. In a way, Rev. Moon was once again testing me to see whether I had "guts." I would not have shown "guts" if I failed fully to appreciate the seriousness of the occasion in my response. I was, after all, his guest and he had honored me by inviting me to respond to this most important address rather than any of the other scholars and theologians who were at the Seoul meetings. My response is best summarized in the following words spoken on that occasion:

I must confess that as an historian of religion who received his scientific training at Harvard University, your explicit and unambiguous sharing with us of your understanding of who you are is one of the most extraordinary moments of my entire career. You have described the announcement of your calling as "astonishing and fearful."

For myself, and for many of my peers whose vocation is the scientific study of religion, awesome religious inspiration is something that happened, if at all, long ago. We are most comfortable studying derivative accounts of religious inspiration and revelation in books and manuscripts. Engaged in this labor, we are interested in our subject matter; we are calm; we are dispassionate and without inner disturbance.

The situation is radically transformed; indeed it is, as you say, truly "astonishing," when we are confronted by an inspired religious leader whose vocation is in the process of unfolding in our own times and even before our very eyes.

We are not accustomed to such a manifestation of spiritual power and charisma. Our scientific and professional training has not prepared us for the encounter. Hence, we guard ourselves against it by inventing psychological categories to neutralize its potency and our discomfort before it. Nevertheless, the spiritual power is there, and, whatever may be the religious tradition in which we are rooted, we feel it.

Of one thing concerning your messianic vision I am certain: all of your works, from which the world has already derived so much benefit, have sprung from your messianic vision. Without it, there would be no ICUS, no PWPA, no *Washington Times*, no Assembly of World Religions, no Little Angels School, no revived University of Bridgeport; without your messianic vision, your original tiny church in Busan would never have become the worldwide religious force for human betterment you now lead.

That statement expresses much of what I feel about Rev. Moon and his mission. To repeat, no person in my adult life apart from my family has had a greater impact on my adult life.

INTERRELIGIOUS ENCOUNTERS

In 1985, Rev. Sun Myung Moon sponsored an Assembly of the World's Religions, the first of many conferences bringing leading representatives of the world's religions together for the sake of mutual understanding, collaboration, and the quest for world peace. The following comments reflect the unique impact of these encounters:

METROPOLITAN PAULOS MAR GREGORIOS
[1922-1996]

Former President, World Council of Churches

WHEN WE WORK WITH you, Rev. Moon, for the unity of humanity we stand on our own convictions and traditions, while sharing with you your great vision of God at the center of all and an all-embracing love for all humanity. We pledge, rooted in our own religious traditions, to work with you for the fulfillment of the will of God.

DR. KAILASH PURI

Author; Radio and TV Host; Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, London, England

AS DEVOUT SIKHS, MY husband and I were most inspired about the spiritual journeys Rev. Moon undertook in order to bring about the vision of world peace centering on the true love

of God. What we particularly appreciated was the fact that the Unification Movement is run not by a man alone, but by both a man and a woman who guide their members, family and friends with God's love. Rev. and Mrs. Moon, are looked upon by their members as True Parents. Very rarely can the prophet, the teacher, the philosopher, the parent, and someone who translates words into deeds reside in one and the same person. All of these, however, embody one man—the Rev. Sun Myung Moon.

SOHANLAL JAIN GANDHI

Secretary General, Anuvrat Vishva Bharati, India

THE ASSEMBLY OF THE World's Religions has strengthened my belief that a sincere endeavor can cleanse "religion" of violence and hatred and bring together, on a common platform, a galaxy of the world's religious leaders of diverse faiths and cultures. It is bound to pave the way for ushering in a nonviolent, harmonious world order.

VEN. KHAMBA LAMA CHOIJILJAV DAMBAJAV

*Head Lama, Tashi Choi Ling Monastery, Mongolia;
Vice President, World Fellowship of Buddhists*

I SINCERELY APPRECIATE DR. MOON'S investment in the religious communities of the world to elicit their cooperation for the common purpose of world peace. It is only on the foundation

of so much generosity on his part in providing opportunities for the different religious communities to consistently work together that we finally became enlightened about the true perspective of religions working together as one for peace. I realize it is time to do homework in my own country—to construct a model nation where eternal happiness can be assured based on firmly establishing spiritual values that can balance the formidable materialistic ways of thinking in modern society.

RT. HON. NAGENDRA PRASAD RIJAL

*President, Nepal (1973-75, 1986); Former President,
World Hindu Federation*

IT WILL TAKE TIME to promote an interreligious concept throughout the world. We have to work tirelessly with the principle of mutual respect and the principle of “live and let live” to achieve this anticipated need. Rev. Sun Myung Moon is the foremost philosopher and leader in this respect. I am glad to support his efforts for this endeavor.

DR. RON BURR

*Former Professor of Religious Studies, University of
Southern Mississippi, USA*

AT THE ASSEMBLY OF the World’s Religions, Rev. Moon threw out a dramatic challenge to the religious leaders in

attendance. He pointed out that the religions of the world need to inspire a planet that is growing ever more cynical. He reminded the listeners the essence of their religion is not its dogma but rather, "true religion is about the practice of love." He further emphasized that, "Love needs to be practiced by those coming from each religion and the best way to practice love is through serving those in need." He has viewed youth as an important catalyst to help initiate change and he has continued to support their effort year after year. The practical example that Religious Youth Service shows to a community is an antidote to the religious violence and hatred that scars our world, and it presents one key element to ending the threat of terrorism.

DR. NICHOLAS N. KITTRIE, KTSJ

*Chairman, Eleanor Roosevelt Institute for Justice and
Peace, Washington, D.C., USA*

I MET THE GRAND MUFTI of Jerusalem. I was later introduced to the Pope in Rome, and I became acquainted with the Chief Rabbi of Israel. But not one of them ever asked for my opinion, advice, assistance, or collaboration. They all were too deeply immersed in their own pasts, in their own institutions, their own missions, and own faiths.

It was in Rev. Moon that I found the broadest ecumenical spirit, a fierce commitment to the unity and fraternity of mankind, an unflinching love of all people, a total commitment to the institution of the family, a tolerance for the diversity of humankind and the need for its harmonization.

AHEAD OF HIS TIME

DR. JAMESON KURASHA

*Professor of Philosophy, University of
Zimbabwe/Greenville College, USA*

FOR THE PAST FIFTY years, Rev. Sun Myung Moon's vision has always been far ahead of his fellow ministers. The Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, which he established in 1954, represented a powerful vision because the church of Christ was more divided than political communities. His message about the Holy Spirit was not for a small isolated group; he dreamt of a Holy Spirit Association with consequences for divided believers.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit was not fashionable then. This was over a decade before Christian leadership started to link the centrality of the Spirit in the entire plan of salvation. The divided Christian community did not seem eager to accept the vision of a unified world Christianity.

We were happy to remain in our religious "sectors" arguing and invariably fighting instead of uniting and promoting peace on earth and good will to all mankind. All the essentials of Christian theology and peaceful coexistence were contained in the name of Rev. Moon's organization. All Christians had to do was to analyze what was meant by the terms Holy Spirit, association, and unification of world Christianity. They would have realized that these were ideas of a theologian without borders. Ecumenism would have gained ground much earlier.

After World War II, the major Christian denominations were tired and not ready for new ideas. Therefore, to ask these lofty denominations to embrace theological insights pronounced by a religious leader from the small eastern nation of South Korea, where Christianity was relatively new, was a stiff challenge. He was called a "sect leader."

Rev. Moon has been promoting, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, inter-religious dialogue and dialogue among civilizations. What the world did not appreciate was that this was a voice of a prophet of God. The world did not realize that wars inflamed by religions can be as eternal as religion themselves. With ongoing wars in several regions of the world notoriously inflamed by religions, it would seem logical to turn to Rev. Moon and ask for his diagnosis and prescription regarding the antipathy between religions. Rev. Moon is a real doctor of religions, and he has surrounded himself with credible thinkers and practitioners in the field of faith and practice. World leaders have every reason to learn from him and his collaborators.

In a powerful book, *Eyewitness to Power*, David Gergen, an advisor to many American presidents, says that good leaders must be identified with one specific cause. For example, Martin Luther King's compelling cause was justice, Jimmy Carter's was human rights, St. Paul's was Christ and John Wesley's was holiness. In the same vein, Rev. Moon's compelling cause is world peace.

A good leader, according to Gergen, is as good as the quality of the people around him. There is a saying, "Show me your friends and I will know who you are." A person unfamiliar with Rev. Moon may need to begin by identifying his 'cabinet' in order to really appreciate him. Among them are Mrs. Hak Ja Han Moon, that precious, gracious queen of peace; Rev. Dr. Chung Hwan Kwak, his disciple and student for half a century; and Dr. Thomas Walsh, secretary general of the Universal Peace Federation, a scholar whose compassion and concern for other people is unforgettable.

Rev. Moon loves to have good, purposeful and powerful minds around him. That is what creative people like him need. With such

people Rev. Moon has built lasting institutions like the Family Federation for World Peace, the World Culture and Sports Festival, universities, and now the Universal Peace Federation.

There is an African saying that builders surround themselves with imaginative minds, while destroyers love idiots who, like wrecking balls, can destroy structures in no time.

A reflection about Rev. Moon must go beyond his message and method to his mysticism. This man is a great believer in God. He loves God and he worships God, but his mysticism leads him to aspire to unite himself with the Almighty in a more intimate manner. He is in a unique union with the Absolute because of his special call from above and his rigorous implementation of it. He often talks of his encounter with God. It is this mystical dimension that is the point of controversy. His claims of closeness to God are beyond what his theological peers can accept. He claims that he is the messiah anointed by God to finish the work of building a true family based on Divine Principle.

His followers would argue that there is nothing extraordinary about Rev. Moon's claims because religious teachers have done this from time immemorial, especially in the East. It could be argued also that in the West (and in independent Christian movements of Africa), many religious leaders claim to be in contact with the Lord and engage in enterprises to "glorify His name." The metaphysics that leads Rev. Moon to claim a special relationship with God is the same metaphysics that lead many Western and African mystics to claim a special relationship with God. Rev. Moon's teachings about true love and true parents are principles rooted in Biblical theology, and they should be evaluated on that basis alone.

Some might argue that the claim of being a messiah anointed by God is blasphemous, because that claim is unique to Christ. To which the defenders of Rev. Moon might argue that in the Jewish tradition the idea of a messiah was not sacred; it meant someone anointed and set apart for God's work. In English, to claim to be a messiah is not to claim to be God.

Furthermore, claims of messiahship create fear in politicians. The idea of a Jewish messiah was not embraced by the Roman officials. There should be analytic philosophers in corridors of power in the church and in the state to inquire what Rev Moon's conception of messiahship is all about. In Biblical examples, the messiah comes to free and unite. The modern politician would ask whom this "new messiah" wants to free and from whom do they need freedom.

Rev. Moon's mysticism is untraditional in that he does not turn away from the visible world, although he warns against some of its excesses and immoralities. Rev. Moon is very Augustinian in his acceptance of the progressive features of modernity. I invite born-again Christians, like myself, not to reject Rev. Moon but to look back at the inclusive African philosophy of St. Augustine:

If those who are called philosophers, particularly Platonists, have said anything which is true and consistent with our faith, we must not reject it, but claim it for our own use. The Egyptians possessed idols and heavenly burdens, which the children of Israel hated and from which they fled; however, they also possessed vessels of gold and silver and clothes for which our forebears, in leaving Egypt, took for themselves in secret, intending to use them in a better manner (Exodus 3:21-22; 12:35). In the same way, pagan learning is not entirely made up of false teachings and superstitions; it contains some excellent teachings, well suited for use by truth, and excellent moral values. Indeed some truths are even found among them which relate to worship of one God. Now these are, so to speak, their gold and their silver, which they did not invent themselves, but which they dug out of the mines of the providence of God, which is scattered throughout the world. The Christian, therefore, can put them to proper use for the proclamation of the Gospel.

Augustine, *On Philosophy and Theology*

Rev. Moon has talked about the Holy Spirit, the unification of world Christianity, professors and world peace, a world peace academy, the unity of the sciences, interreligious dialogue and alliance, an inter-religious council at the United Nations, world peace, peace TV, true love, True Parents and family federation. Let us ask what he means. Let us learn to synthesize from Augustine and take the treasures with us to the Promised Land.

Rev. Moon's prophetic record is clean and clear; let us listen and capture what this wise man from the East has been teaching about faith, wisdom, the unity of sciences, family, goodness, truth, beauty, justice, equality and liberty.

HON. W.J.M. LOKUBANDARA

Speaker of Parliament, Sri Lanka

THE UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION has initiated action to resolve national and international conflict through interreligious dialogue. This is very timely step where we can work towards an era of taking the good in every religion and coming to a platform of world peace.

LEAPING TOWARDS UNIFICATION

REV. DAVID A. HART

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Center for American Studies, Trivandrum, India*

I FIRST MET "THE MOONIES" in the 1970s at the height of their "cult status controversy." A new arrival in New York to study for a Master's degree in theology at the prestigious Union Theological Seminary, I was told that my next-door neighbor in my residence hall, an Indian, was being held unwillingly by them, and I was warned that if I accepted an invitation to any of their conferences, the food would be drugged and I would surely never leave their evil clutches.

Sadly, at a place that was committed to open theological dialogue and that indeed had invited their denomination, the Unification Church, into their ecumenical training programs, I never managed to discover the actual teachings or workings of the followers of Sun Myung Moon at that time, since I accepted the advice offered and kept them deliberately at arm's length, despite the fact that Gordon Anderson and other members did indeed reach out their hand of friendship to me in college life.

It took me another two decades to encounter the movement again, this time when I was appointed to help build a multi-faith centre on the campus of a modern university in the United Kingdom, and

I needed to be in touch with whoever was in the field of multi-faith endeavor. From my first contact with Robin Marsh and Margaret Ali in the London office, I realized what a mistake I had made in the 1970s in not becoming more engaged with this wonderful group of devotees of "True Father," as I discovered they affectionately called their founder and leader.

I was very touched when the UK director, Tim Read, gave me (and indeed my undergraduate students later for Winchester University's New Religions Course) an informative PowerPoint presentation on the life and teaching of Sun Myung Moon which began with the inspiring vision he had from Jesus himself as a teenager, inviting him to help complete the Messiah's work. As soon as I realized that that was the founder's starting point, participating in and not replacing the call and person of Jesus, I realized that the Christian churches had profoundly misinterpreted the Unification Church's mission. They had called attention to the Founder's messianic claims, which I later discovered were, like those of the historical Jesus of Nazareth, guarded, secret to his followers, and often enigmatic.

When I later read Moon's writings themselves and also heard him speak of his messianic commission in relation to Jesus, I realized that although he claims a messianic status he also believes that the messianic vocation is universal and he is not in any way wishing to detract from the figure of Jesus, who he argues in *The Divine Principle* plays a key role in the history of salvation and indeed advises contemporaries, as do the Prophet Mohammad and the Lord Buddha, from his unique position in the spirit world.

It is important not to pass over these controversies too lightly, as Rev. Moon's role in the Unificationist project remains central and does remain a bugbear for critics and especially orthodox Christians. Accepting his controversial status, I would like to ask his detractors which religious leader coming from any tradition has made an impact on the spiritual geography and history of the world without controversy.

Religious traditions all have established scriptures and liturgical practices, and additions to these have always raised doubts and ques-

tions about authenticity and status. Here Sun Myung Moon is in no different position than, say, St. Augustine or Martin Luther, who both found themselves subject to opprobrium and indeed outright persecution by Christians but who are now regarded universally as contributing to a fuller understanding of the meaning and significance of the Christian faith.

I can already imagine my Christian and scholarly colleagues raising their bushy eyebrows and asking me whether I am putting Sun Myung Moon on a par with St. Augustine and Martin Luther. Well, I am ready to wipe the smile off their faces by stating boldly that I am! For indeed Rev. Moon's contributions both to understanding the place of Christianity within the gamut of world religions and in exploring the spiritual globe from the principle of unification are unique modern contributions to the global religious vision and a challenge to open up our individual theologies and communities to a more inclusive understanding of the workings of the divine in our midst.

Here we see the true profundity of Sun Myung Moon's theological perception, which has attracted even radical theologians such as Richard Rubenstein to come back to an understanding of God as objective that they had rejected in the humanitarian theological climate of Western academia in the 1960s.

For Rubenstein, God can indeed be seen as a unifying force, bringing together the teachings of monotheistic, polytheistic, and even technically atheist faiths such as Buddhism, into a central theological schema which believes that God, far from being a distinct personality working out the salvation of the world, needs our active human collaboration to achieve the necessary spiritual goals of spiritual and (above all: yes!) ethical harmony, to bring the world back to a purity it tragically lost in Eden.

The centrality of the story of Adam and Eve, and indeed of their sons Abel and Cain, and the paradigm of their relationships and what they did wrong and right, produces some challenging ideas for today's world. Not least, they reintroduce into the religious debate the universal importance of sexuality as the basic human bonding

and the importance of faithfulness to one's spouse within all religious and ethical codes.

Sexuality is also regarded by Sun Myung Moon in his writings as having a central importance in spirituality. Though the teachings on sexual abstinence and its significance, even within the context of monogamous marriage, have caused disquiet and even ridicule among some critics, Moon has reminded the religious world that sexual discipline is vital to the control and expansion of one's spiritual vocation, and that "playing around" can have dire consequences for oneself and those who surround one. It is a universal malaise that the world does not know how to cope with sexual freedom.

The conclusions offered by Unificationism, including arranged interreligious marriages, may not be universally accepted, but the importance of sexuality and fidelity are part of the message that surely should be welcomed and incorporated by all faithful followers of the divine and human ethical imperative, as Kant would have described this area of common experience.

But, above all, Sun Myung Moon's abiding contribution has surely been to provide a vital link between the spiritual and the political, in his emphasis on the importance of the United Nations and his founding of the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace.

The foundation of the "Ambassadors for Peace" as a convocation of like-minded individuals from every country and society in the world was a stroke of genius in the world of religious diversity in which we find ourselves today. It proclaims by its very foundation the importance of founding not an exclusive club of believers but rather an international network of individuals, families, and associations that are all committed with their own people and localized religious and philosophical groups to the idea of working for a common good, encapsulated in the idea of a spiritual "house" in the United Nations.

Such a "house" may perhaps be focused in the geographical centers of New York and Geneva, but it effectively works every place where the Spirit of God works today to unify divisions, such as between

North and South Korea, or Protestant and Catholic Christianity, or between Singhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka. The Spirit is working to bring about Cheon Il Guk, the long-expected commonwealth of God within the technological world which is our achievement as human beings today. It is working to sustain and support the world for our children to enjoy and build upon what their parents have done for the foundations of true peace, a peace that eluded us until Sun Myung Moon gave us a vision to which he and we can both fully commit.

Thank you, Rev. Moon, for your life of self-sacrifice and vision. In some sense, even we who are outside your membership as Ambassadors for Peace can salute you also as our "True Father," for you have contributed to the global vision of the earlier messiahs, and we salute your noble path and commit ourselves to follow it in the future!

HIS MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS

PROFESSOR SULAYMAN NYANG

*Department of African and Islamic Studies,
Howard University, USA*

OVER THE LAST TWENTY years, we have come to appreciate the work that has been undertaken by your movement, which has enriched the religious consciousness of humankind. Your movement has distinguished itself in so many areas, but I would like to concentrate on five. These include renewal of the sacred and interfaith harmony, the academy, the media, human services, and spiritual awakening in secular realms of leadership.

Even though Rev. Moon's movement might be considered by students of comparative religions to be only a small but growing plant in the garden of world religions, its fruits have far outstripped the expectations of many observers in the sphere of religious development. This movement has served as an effective platform for persons and leaders of all religions of significance around the planet.

I myself have benefited immeasurably, having been afforded the chance while a guest at Rev. Moon's conferences to interact personally and intimately with Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists and members of so many other communities. This is thanks to Rev. Moon and the international programs for the enrichment and enhancement of religious consciousness.

Furthermore, we must remain aware constantly that it is only through Rev. Moon that the possibility arose for men and women like me who came from Africa to be offered such opportunities. This

includes those of us Africans who eventually came to spend most of our years in the West.

Closely related to providing this provision and platform for inter-religious dialogue is the creation of a greater understanding between the races—an ideal sought everywhere, but accomplished virtually nowhere as genuinely as under the auspices of Unificationism. Through this movement the Adamite paradigm has been globalized in the sense that theism and humanism became intertwined in the unity of humankind. No religious group exists anywhere on earth which embodies this spirit of unity more thoroughly and elegantly than the Unificationist movement.

The third factor in the religious world is the Unificationist concern for the maintenance of purity with respect to family. This accomplishment cannot be taken for granted today. Unificationists excel in their response to the burgeoning laxity in the discipline to keep the family whole and pure. This movement has elevated the family to the highest level recommended by biblical standards in an age where sexual license has been justified by the competing paradigms. Furthermore, Unificationists are on the side of common sense on this issue, opposed on either side to fanaticism or licentiousness. They neither make a taboo out of what is allowable and significant, nor are they idolaters of sexual practice in the manner of much of popular culture.

In the field of advancing the frontiers of knowledge, Rev. Moon excelled once again. I recall the first Unification meeting I ever attended. It was a 1980 meeting of the International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences. (Interestingly, Rev. Moon predicted—against conventional wisdom—the election of President Ronald Reagan!) At this meeting I, as a young scholar stood with my mouth agape to find myself surrounded by some of the most preeminent Muslim scholars in the world at that time: such people as Syed Hussein Nasr of George Washington University; Ismail Al Farouqi, professor of religion at Temple University; Ahurshid Ahmad from Pakistan; the internationally renowned Dr. Francis Botchway, and others.

There is no argument that Rev. Moon convened some of the best minds from around the world, including Nobel laureates and pioneers in knowledge and research. There was a widespread adage in the academy, "Unification might be small, but they have the largest Rolodex of scholars in the world." The record of the International Conferences on the Unity of the Sciences for the years of its activity will stun future researchers. This commitment to higher education continued on many fronts including the Professors World Peace Academy, and now is manifesting itself in permanent, and increasingly, internationally recognized institutions of higher learning such as Sun Moon University in Korea, and the University of Bridgeport, in the Northeast Corridor of the United States.

Like the Christian Scientists, who have now established themselves worldwide through *The Christian Science Monitor*, the same thing has happened with Unificationism, only perhaps more so. Rev. Moon, an Asian (not a white American), established a challenge to the prevailing media in the world's most powerful capital, Washington D.C. With the formation of *The Washington Times*, he succeeded in establishing an international newspaper, which is now quoted globally for opinions regarding policy out of Washington.

The Washington Times journalists are well established among their peers in the Washington press corps and internationally. Also in *The Washington Times* family of media is the magazine *World and I*, which must be recognized for its startling achievements. *World and I* is an important intellectual vehicle for the dissemination of pure knowledge in the areas of science, and culture.

The list of magazines and newspapers founded and maintained by Rev. Moon is commanding. He established the first newspaper which transcended national boundaries in Latin America, *Tiempos del Mundo*, runs major dailies in Korea and Japan, and acquired United Press International. This means that Rev. Moon's vision of an honest and fair media aimed at uplifting both the human and the divine has a broad capacity to grow and expand.

Because Rev. Moon's contribution to intellectual and leadership life has been so daunting, some people are not aware of the full

extent of his stake in the area of relief work, social service, and emergency aid to provide food, shelter, and medicine for displaced and war-ravaged populations. Additionally, virtually all of this relief work is structured in such a way as to integrate education, and interreligious and interracial experience for those working on the service projects.

Virtually everyone in this world has felt the outreach of Rev. Moon's projects to uplift the weak, the poor, and the helpless. Organizations such as the International Relief Friendship Foundation and the Religious Youth Service have worked from Rome to Tonga, from Atlanta to Uganda. This movement has cast its net of care far and wide, including Africa, Europe and Asia. Here we see a humble and sacrificial work in God's name, serving less fortunate members of humankind.

This is a timely and extremely important contribution by sensitizing public policymakers to religious leaders. The implementation of this lifelong vision of Rev. Moon is being carried out at an astonishing pace under the auspices of the Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace, now the Universal Peace Federation. This brings the feet of the political policymakers to the fire of religious consciousness in an effective and vigorously pursued program. People who are not aware of the program and activities of the UPF are missing an historical moment of prophetic proportions.

One can do little more to serve humankind than to remind social and political leaders of their responsibility to God and to human beings. I had the great privilege to speak at these conferences a couple of times. It is humbling to be in the position to remind those in social and political power of their responsibility. Through this, one can feel all the more so the weight of Rev. Moon's lifelong burden of responsibility. What he has accomplished in a lifetime would have taken others a thousand years to accomplish. It is remarkable for one man to have so many achievements. That is the difference between us human beings. That is the measure of the man.

DR. CHARLES SELENGUT

Professor of Religious Studies, Drew University, USA

REV. SUN MYUNG MOON'S leadership in sponsoring and organizing international and inter-religious encounters, conferences and dialogues has had a profound impact upon all who participate. I learned that interreligious encounters change perceptions, and encountering believers from other faiths in frankness and honesty, matters.

At conferences in Cordoba, Spain, and in other places I, an observant Jew, met many Muslim scholars. We knew of the larger pain of the two communities, but what joy I experienced in learning of our often similar religious activities and perceptions! The exciting and at times confusing multiplicity within the Islamic religious culture paralleled the intensity of debate and engagement in my Jewish experience. There was no way Islam could now be simply "the other."

We talked and still talk with openness. We do not always concur, but these are peers and, well, friends are allowed to disagree.

RECONCILIATION OF RELIGIONS

VEN. CHEOL KI LEE

*President, Seoul Association of
Ambassadors for Peace, Korea*

REV. DR. SUN MYUNG Moon has held one single focus and conviction since being called by God during his youth. From the time when he began his life's work until now, his single-minded dedication has been to the reconciliation and unity among all religions. His sole commitment has been to know Heaven's way and teach it to all humankind.

Rev. Moon teaches that God relates to human beings without regard to their nationality, race, gender or religious background. God gives blessings to all people without discrimination. We should receive these blessings and feel responsible to uphold them, develop them and multiply them. However, even if we invest our best heartfelt efforts in studying, working, cultivating and training ourselves, and then praying, repenting and living for the sake of others with true love, it is still not quite enough.

Rev. Moon teaches that God works through the principle of restitution in order to restore us to the standard of His creation. In this understanding of the original will of God, Rev. Moon is teaching God's will to people from all religious backgrounds, and leading them through true love. He does not disregard or exclude people because of differences of faith; instead, he asserts that all people need to understand and reconcile with one another.

A proof of this fact was shown to me at a recent Universal Peace Federation (UPF) event in Seoul, Korea, where 50,000 leaders from around the world gathered at one place; among them I saw many religious leaders from various religions and nations. Indeed, one of the core purposes of UPF is to reconcile all religions, opening the door to this age of God's kingdom.

Throughout his life, Rev. Moon faced all kinds of trials and tribulations with the sole purpose of spreading a peace movement, transcending religion, nationality and ethnicity. His life course has had a single, resolute focus: to achieve God's desire to build the world of peace. Although there were many trials along the way, as his journey continues people throughout the world, including Ambassadors for Peace from all nations, ethnicities and faiths, have welcomed him wholeheartedly.

I have seen as many as 70,000 leaders from all around the world attending a single global rally. Many of them willingly and joyfully came to Korea on short notice, with a desire to visit the nation of the True Parents, their fatherland in heart. I also saw many leaders of different nationalities from various walks of life welcome him with utmost respect and reverence, being deeply moved while attending one of his events. Having seen this many times has made a profound impact in my heart.

The Unification Principle teaches that God created Adam and Eve as the first human ancestors. God invested Himself one hundred percent for them—His begotten son and daughter—connecting them with Him through His love, life and lineage. They were thus like the flesh of His own flesh. Nevertheless, through the Fall, they came to have a blood relationship with the enemy, Satan, and became his children instead, separated from God. Witnessing this reality, God's heart has been scarred with anguish and sorrow throughout history.

This is what God has been trying to teach us, but no one had realized this truth. Only our respected Rev. Moon has come to understand this, and he has been sharing it throughout the world with all humankind. It is amazing and wonderful to see a man become so

victorious and successful in his own generation. This is happening for the first time in history.

I came to learn this through studying the *Divine Principle*, which is Rev. Moon's teaching about how to follow the heavenly path according to the will of God. He has brought so many blessings and contributed so much to humankind. We need to fully understand his work in order to strengthen our nations and make them peaceful. In this age of God's kingdom, we need to applaud him for his accomplishments rather than cling to our different religious beliefs with closed minds.

IMAM HAITHAM BUNDAKJI

*Vice-Chairman, Islamic Society of Orange County,
California, USA*

THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF Dr. Sun Myung Moon and the Universal Peace Federation, I have come to love Jews and Christians as my brothers and sisters. We are working together to bring peace.

SEN. MJR. REV. ABEDNEGO M. DLAMINI

Former Senator; Chairman, UPF-Swaziland

INTERRELIGIOUS HARMONY IS GOD'S way of life. We all serve one God through different prophets, which has created many barriers. However, through the Universal Peace Federation, we understand that we all originate from one God and we are created for the same purpose. The inspiration of Rev. Moon brings peace and harmony not only in a region but in the whole world.

HARMONY OF ALL FAITHS

PROF. MASAHISA HAYASHI

Professor of Public Finance, Waseda University, Japan

OBSERVING WHAT REV. SUN Myung Moon has been doing, I am immensely impressed at the great scale and variety of activities he has energetically been carrying out for world peace.

He is, of course, a great religious leader, an extremely original thinker and theologian. Though I, as a mediocre man, do not understand him fully, he seems to have an extraordinary ability to communicate with the spiritual world. Though it is essentially a matter of faith rather than a scientific fact, he may be a Messiah. And history teaches us how difficult it is to accept a living person as a Messiah, or even as a saint.

As a social scientist, I am much impressed by the deep involvements of Rev. Moon in the affairs of the secular world or the things which many religious leaders may consider to be Caesar's. I have read many biographies of the greatest men in history, and when I learned what Rev. Moon had been doing, I thought of Alexander the Great. As Alexander the Great conquered the world including Persia, Rev. Moon conquered the world. Incidentally, I remembered that Alexander the Great caused his high officers to marry Persian women, which reminded me of the intercultural exchange marriages that Rev. Moon has been promoting.

But after I saw Rev. Moon in person, I decided to compare him to Genghis Khan, who founded the Mongol Empire, the largest contig-

uous land empire in history. While Genghis Khan conquered most of the Eurasian continent by military force, Rev. Moon has conquered the world by spreading the message of peace. It is amazing to witness that his disciples are working hard to make peace all over the world, including in former socialist countries.

We read in history about multi-talented great men such as Leonardo da Vinci, who was celebrated as a painter, sculptor, architect, engineer and scientist, and Julius Caesar, who was simultaneously a great general, statesman, administrator and writer. The great and multiple talents of our contemporary, Rev. Moon, overwhelm me. If he had chosen to do so, he could easily be a great general, statesman and public administrator in the secular world. He is a great businessman and uses his business talent to raise the necessary funds for various activities on behalf of world peace all over the world.

His vision is very far-reaching, and he addresses the most serious problems that mankind is facing. His choice of means to solve these problems is very impressive. He selects the most strategic and effective means for solving these problems. His solutions are based upon a deep understanding of the messages of God, and, unlike many liberal leaders, he does not shy away from what may be labeled old-fashioned.

Though there is a long list of important activities that Rev. Moon has been energetically carrying out, I would like to focus on the promotion of interreligious harmony. As a student of human history and a Christian who was baptized by the Southern Baptist Church during my middle school days, I am fully aware that there have been many brutal and prolonged wars fought among religions and among different sects of the same religion, including Christianity.

There were sweeping military campaigns in the Middle East and North Africa in the name of Islam. Crusaders marched to Jerusalem to take back the land. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there were bloody wars between Protestant and Catholic rulers. The Spanish Inquisition was notorious for burning people alive for minor differences in religious beliefs. Today the clash of civilizations is much discussed, and religious factors are very important in the

international conflicts in various parts of the world. Many fundamentalists carry out suicide bombings under the name of their God, and brutal retaliations are made under the name of another God.

After being baptized by the Southern Baptist Church, I studied catechism in a Catholic Church and attended many different Bible classes at the International Christian University, where I received my undergraduate training. I studied many different interpretations of the Bible by famous theologians such as Emil Brunner, who joined the founding of International Christian University, Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Kanzo Uchimura. Uchimura was very influential among Japanese intellectuals and unique as a Christian who advocated a non-church movement, and there were many disciples of Uchimura among the professors of the International Christian University.

I also attended meetings of the Jehovah's Witnesses, read many books on Zen Buddhism, and studied the teachings of Shinran, a very famous and influential Buddhist monk of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries in Japan. Reading many books and attending meetings of different religions and sects of Christianity, I became more and more convinced that it was wrong for different religions and sects to fight for a monopoly on salvation, truth and justice.

The practice of interreligious harmony that Rev. Moon is promoting is very impressive and revolutionary. Many religious leaders tend to be dogmatic and try to monopolize salvation, truth and justice; they exclude other religions and sects, accusing them of wrong and evil ways and leading believers to hell. How many people have been persecuted and brutally executed in history in the name of God? Even today, bitter wars are fought among different religions and sects.

World Scripture, a comparative anthology of sacred texts, compiled and published under the leadership of Rev. Moon, is indeed an epoch-making work. The book clearly demonstrates that all religions give essentially the same teachings.

I have attended many conferences sponsored by the Universal Peace Federation and its predecessor, the Interreligious and Interna-

tional Federation for World Peace, and witnessed religious leaders of different religions and sects embracing and reconciling with each other for the promotion of world peace. Prayers are made in the fashion of different religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism and others.

Secular leaders live in the world of imperfection and relativity and are quite ready to make all kinds of compromises in order to reach a consensus, often deliberately ambiguous. In economics, rational decisions are made in the comparison of marginal cost and marginal benefit. Both benefits and costs are relative in nature. But the essence of religion seems to be an absolute value, making it much more difficult to tolerate the differences of other religions and sects. Sometimes fundamentalists want to monopolize salvation, truth and justice and even massacre believers from other religions and sects under the name of God.

To accept other religions and sects as equally important for salvation, truth and justice requires a revolutionary change of mind. The power and influence of a religion and a sect is usually proportionate to the size of its following. To gather as many followers as possible, religious leaders are tempted to make a dogmatic claim that only their religion or sect, and none other, can save people. But unless religions abandon such dogmatic and self-righteous claims, real peace will never be achieved and the massacres of believers of other religions will continue in the name of God. I think Rev. Moon has taken a revolutionary step in interreligious harmony, and its promotion is critically important in achieving lasting world peace.

BRINGING TOGETHER EAST AND WEST

REV. BERTIL PERSSON

*National Chancellor, International Association
of Educators for World Peace*

RUDYARD KIPLING SAID IN his poem "The Ballad of East and West," around a hundred years ago, 'Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet.' But this prophecy is no longer accurate. Instead, today we can rephrase it: "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and now the twain have met." How so?

Today East and West are able to dialogue, primarily because of technological developments. In this dialogue we discover Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon. With a fascinating purposefulness and incredible devotion to realize God's will in word and deed, he has been striving for decades to seek constructive solutions to critical global problems. In these efforts he has brought together from East and West, leaders of academia, arts, civil society, government and religion.

Principally, there are four ideologies that have created the prophet and the spiritual visionary, Rev. Moon.

He was born into the atmosphere of Confucianism. In the ninth century, Confucianism came from China. Actually, it was a combination of ideas of two contemporary philosophers. They lived at the turn of the century 500/400 BC. K'ung Fu Tzu (Confucius in Latin) was a government official and spoke about "the good society." Somebody asked him: "Is there one word that alone can serve as

a principle of conduct for life?" The Master said: "It is the word *shu*—reciprocity: Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you."

One of the Master's disciples developed this explanation: "The basis for the world is laid in the state. The basis for the state is in the family. The basis for the family is in the individual." This is the ethical code for a peaceful and good society and world. This ethical spirit that should dominate the citizen's mind and generate "the good society" is called *tao*, which means "the way" or "the way of life."

Another philosopher, Lao Tzu, the supposed founder of Taoism, added cosmic life-energy, spirituality and life to the understanding of *tao*. It is the knowledge about life which defines the life-affirming and life-promoting ethical values. If K'ung Fu Tzu was an atheistic social democrat, Lao Tzu was a consciously spiritual environmentalist. Lao Tzu analyzed life and its inherent "scientific" biological characteristics.

Later on, some of his disciples came to the conclusion that the cosmic life that gives life to vegetation, animals and human beings is made up of two opposite principles or characteristics or natures: on the one side, the male and positive principle, *yang*; and on the other side, the female and negative principle, *yin*. They are not opposites, but complements. "Life is the amalgamated harmony of *yin* and *yang*," one contemporary interpreter says.

Consider the analogy of our brain's functionality. When the right side and left side are in balance, the human being feels well and harmonious. This condition is called *tao*. According to K'ung Fu Tzu and Lao Tzu, the human being who incarnates *tao* on a higher level of consciousness is on the level of the sage. The sage, the sublime one, is "the harmonious human being," the ideal human being.

Along with Confucianism, Rev. Moon came into contact with Buddhism, in the syncretistic Mahayana form. It shares basic views held by K'ung Fu Tzu and Lao Tzu but emphasizes the automatic consequences of the human being's relationship to spirituality and *tao*.

The main teaching of Buddhism is about the human being's relationship to life and its consequences, and about the connection

between cause and effect. The entire history of mankind is built on a series of interactions between cause and effect. In order to create "the good society" and "the harmonious human being," we have to begin to find out the ultimate cause for the initial position and, from there, start the rehabilitating measures.

When Rev. Moon was eleven, his family converted to Christianity. Since Christianity is a diffuse concept, I want to explain that on his way to becoming an independent spiritual visionary, Rev. Moon encountered two versions of Christianity. First, Methodism was founded by the Anglican clergyman, John Wesley, in England. Wesley talked about the method as sanctification, which found its place with the intellectually perspicacious Rev. Moon. Sanctification is about absorbing the qualities of God in one's life through self-training so you will become what Mahayana Buddhism calls a bodhisattva, or a "saint."

Second, Presbyterians taught about God as the Almighty, God as life, to which we have to submit. All individuals have equal, spiritually determined value, because just as the Psalmist said: "You are gods; all of you are children of the most High." (Psalm 82:6) God is the life within everyone. The awareness about this view about God and every individual is the way to peace, freedom from imperialism and wars, and unity and agreement among people.

But Rev. Moon did not stop here. His favorite reading became the stories of Genesis in the Bible. He studied them, impressed by the spirit of K'ung Fu Tzu and Lao Tzu. Spirituality and life are the same as God and the Holy Spirit in the Bible. He read: "God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27) Every human being should reflect and incarnate God in his life. Both Adam and Eve were supposed to reflect God's inherent characteristics of yang and yin, respectively, and incarnate them in their family as the reflection of God and the root of "the good society." But then the Fall of Man happened, and mass media and daily life show us that the Fall has continued ever since. The Fall occurs when we do not submit to the will of God, when we do not follow our God-given inherent nature.

When Rev. Moon read the Gospels, he understood Jesus as the sage who used all his wisdom in the true prophetic spirit to reveal the Fall and fight to restore the harmonious Creation to the way it was in the very beginning. This ideal original state is described in the Bible as the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven. Here is the ideal liaison to God, and the basis of all every individual and ecological laws.

The words "prophet," "messiah" and "spiritual visionary" are, in this sense, synonymous. Rev. Moon looks upon Jesus and the other religious prophets such as K'ung Fu Tzu, Lao Tzu, Moses, Buddha, Muhammad, as one group of saints. There is only one God, and they are all His prophets. Everyone who is God's ambassador is God's prophet, God's messiah and God's visionary.

VLAD CIUBUCCIU

*Former Counselor to the President
of the Republic of Moldova*

“IN ORDER TO BECOME children of God,” Rev. Sun Myung Moon emphasizes, “first of all, we have the responsibility to resemble Him. This means to embody true love, which begins with filial piety, develops into patriotism, then reaches the level of a saint, finally attaining the position of the son or daughter of God.” I have read with care and respect the speeches of this unusual apostle of truth, faith and righteousness and studied his works promoting faith, peace and brotherhood. To my surprise, I found many common points between the Christians in Moldova and Rev. Moon. It is recommended that we, who were reared in patriarchal Christian families with clear principles of common faith and spirituality, edify ourselves with Rev. Moon's teachings about purity, fidelity and filial piety in the family.

A SHINTO PRIEST SEEKS RECONCILIATION IN ISRAEL

VEN. SHOSHU MUREI

Priest, Takamitamanomiya Shrine, Japan

I AM A SHINTOIST WHO participated with my husband in the Interreligious and International 144,000 Clergy Couples Blessing and Rededication Ceremony in Washington, D.C., on April 27, 2002.

When I first heard about the Blessing Ceremony, I had no idea about it except that I had to go to Washington, D.C., with my husband. Since my husband lived a secluded life, never going far from our shrine, it was hard to imagine that he would go to the United States with me. So I sat down before my god and asked for instruction.

It came clearly and at once. "Go! Your path will be open from there. Your husband will surely go."

At that moment, I saw a vision of Rev. Sun Myung Moon reaching out his hand to me. I put everything into God's hand. Three days before departure, my husband suddenly said, "I will go." Buddhist and Christian leaders from Japan participated in the Blessing ceremony, which we were told connected the lineage of religious leaders with God's lineage.

I was born from a long line of traditional Shintoists and became a Shinto priest in 1963. I had an inborn gift for mediation and in 1983, I got a revelation from *Takamimusubi*, a creator god in Japanese

religious tradition. At that time, my God became a golden pillar and entered my body in the course of my midwinter discipline, saying, "I have descended from heaven for the sake of world peace." Until that time I had been praying only for Japan, so I was curious why I had to do something for world peace. Now I understand that my mission for world peace was predestined thirty years ago.

I have determined to devote my life to the cause of world peace as an Ambassador for Peace of the Universal Peace Federation. Even though it may be the "widow's mite," I will do it because it is God's wish.

I deeply appreciate Rev. Moon's vision for establishing world peace based on true love and true family. In order to establish world peace, one has to build a strong foundation at one's feet, which is the true family based on true love. Those who cannot establish families filled with true love are not qualified to speak about world peace. Therefore, I am publicly speaking that our goal is to complete the true family.

Representing Shinto in Japan, I visited Israel in 2003 as part of the Middle East Peace Initiative. Before the pilgrimage, I offered obeisance at the Ise Shrine to the goddess Amaterasu Omikami in order to make an advance report on my pilgrimage to the goddess. I got a holy stone from the most holy place of the shrine. In 1993, at the Gosengu Festival of the Ise Shrine, guests from Israel had presented white stones to the shrine. In return, I wanted to bring a holy stone from the Ise Shrine to Israel and bury it there, repenting for Japan's wrongdoings and fostering a world of peace hand-in-hand with people of the world. I thought that if my pilgrimage to Israel could contribute to this great cause, the goddess would be pleased with it.

The Japanese delegation included Christian ministers, Buddhist priests, political leaders and scholars. I asked a Christian minister, "I brought a holy stone of the Ise Shrine to bury it in the ground of Israel. Where do you recommend burying it?"

He replied, "I recommend at the base of the olive tree at the Garden of Gethsemane, where Christ prayed before he was arrested 2,000 years ago."

We visited the garden and buried the holy stone there. We prayed together that this could be a cornerstone for forgiving the sins of humankind as well as for creating the world of peace. We prayed from the bottom of our hearts, "May everything be done by the power of true love."

On October 22, we marched through the Old City of Jerusalem shouting "Peace." This march included 400 Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Shintoists, and people from other religions. These stone alleyways of Jerusalem were stained with Jesus' blood 2,000 years ago; I felt the heart and spirit of Jesus Christ there and began to cry. He was severely persecuted and afflicted, but he did not condemn or resent those who destroyed him. His sorrowful heart touched my heart, and I kept shedding tears.

That afternoon, at a big rally in Jerusalem's Independence Park, one black minister shouted, "Let us be united transcending the difference of religion, nationality, race, and culture!"

I rushed up on the stage and hugged her. We began to cry together. It was a moment of repentance and reconciliation. I felt that she was my real sister and the world was truly united there. I have participated in many interreligious conferences and dialogues, but I had never experienced this spirit of repentance and reconciliation.

In one period of the past, Japan was caught in the trap of militarism and lost her genuine traditional culture characterized by a genuine love for nature and love for human beings. We Japanese lost our national pride and often despised our traditional culture including Shinto. "State Shinto" was the official religion of Japan until the end of World War II, but it was an artificial religion made by the government and different from traditional Shinto with its simple nature. Both worshiped Amaterasu Omikami as the supreme goddess. Some blame her for causing the war, because under her flag Japan headed towards militarism. But I believe that people's faith in her was manipulated by its militaristic government. She is grieved at

this sad history. I, as a Shinto priest, have a collective responsibility for all past wrongdoings and mistakes of Japan and Shinto; so I would like to apologize for all sins committed by Japan, especially to Koreans, even kneeling on the ground in front of each Korean.

Amaterasu Omikami said to me, "Go beyond all past prejudice! The world is one! It is time for all religions to work together—not only for Japan, but also for the world!" I believe that Japan should recover her national pride and contribute to world peace, becoming the mother nation of the world.

Recently I was taught about Yoo Gwan Soon, who stood up for the liberation of Korea from Japanese occupation and died in prison at age seventeen. My heart aches for such a young woman killed by our people. As a Shintoist, I would like to apologize for this brutal conduct. She was part of the Samil Movement, a Korean protest movement which stood up against the Japanese occupation that began on March 1, 1919 in Seoul. Officers fired on the crowd, and more than 7,500 demonstrators were killed. This movement rapidly spread throughout the country, but the nationwide uprisings that resulted were brutally put down by the Japanese. Yoo Gwan Soon led a rally in her hometown, Cheonan. As a martyr, she symbolized this movement.

Rev. Moon received a lot of persecution, but he carried out his mission without complaint or resentment. He was also tortured by the Japanese police. In spite of all this, he still forgives and loves Japan. This is really amazing to me. As a Shinto priest, I counsel my followers every day. Sometimes I mediate between spiritual beings and my clients in order to heal their illnesses and resolve other troubles. Forgiveness is the key to solving the problems of resentful spirits. Only true love can solve resentment, and even Satan surrenders to true love. Because Rev. Moon forgives the unforgivable and loves the unlovable, I believe that he is the Messiah.

Rev. Benita Lawrence, a black Christian minister from the United States, visited my shrine on October 24, 2006 as part of the Universal Peace Federation's fourth World Peace Tour; she delivered Rev. Moon's message entitled "God's Ideal Family and the Kingdom of

the Peaceful, Ideal World." First, I performed a Shinto ritual and prayed, "This Holy Wine Ceremony and Holy Fire Ceremony is officiated under the witness of God the Creator, god of Musubi, and True Parents of Heaven and Earth." It was a moving event with 120 participants.

I had a very deep internal exchange with Rev. Lawrence. When I first saw her, the spiritual world behind me was delighted. She was also a spiritual person, so we found a congenial spirit in each other. We hugged each other and rejoiced at our encounter. I felt that Shinto and Christianity merged in this event.

I want to meet Rev. Moon in person and receive his guidance, calling him "my father." I pray every morning for him to be welcomed in Japan as a national guest. May his lifelong achievements as the True Parent of humankind shine brilliantly all over the world.

INSIGHTS AT THE PEACE PALACE

EVA KANTURKOVA

Chairman, Writers' Union, Czech Republic

UNAWARE OF MY GOOD fortune, I was invited to Seoul to a Universal Peace Federation meeting and visit to the Peace Palace in the Korean mountains. Its role, as I understand it, is to be a temple and a center for carrying out the vision of Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Universal Peace Federation. The building has become a symbol and feature of a powerful legend because Rev. Moon built it in a place where he had retreated for meditation in moments of difficulty and searching.

When we were approaching the Peace Palace, my friend Luba, who had been familiar with Rev. Moon's generous work and activities for many years, said that it was a place where God speaks. I do not dare to judge these delicate matters, as my knowledge of Rev. Moon's teaching and activities is not as intimate. Yet something happened to me there.

Our lives are stories—following a way or a *tao*—and at the end, we will know whether it is a sequence of steps leading up or down; perhaps we were only hovering, wandering and rambling in a circle. Writers, tested sufficiently by their age, can think this way even about their own books. The secrets and excitement that characterize our lives or creative stories are a product of our free will, thanks to which we do not know, either as a person or author, where our next step will take us. We can only have confidence that the path will lead to fulfillment and not to ruin.

I cannot write with confidence that God spoke to me in the Peace Palace on the gorgeous mountainside. However, I was listening attentively to what Rev. Moon said during the ceremony. The Peace Palace exemplifies Rev. Moon's vision about the coming of the new age, and it reminded me of something important in my own search for truth as an author. Two of my books gained a completely new context through this powerful spiritual experience. Looking at the Peace Palace from the perspective of Dr. Moon's vision linked my two books into one and clarified their message. I suddenly saw why I had written them and how they were connected.

The first of the two books is *The Lord of the Tower*. I began to write it during the dark years of my country's occupation by the Soviet army after its invasion in 1968. It is a book about guilt at the betrayal of a gift and its redress. The main character in the book is a man who is unable to finish his novel, his life's work, because he bestowed his gift to a criminal regime. In the first sentence of the book, he dies, leaving behind an unfinished manuscript. A demon then tests him, offering a posthumous possibility to complete the story he was unable to finish.

From the very beginning, my intention with *The Lord of the Tower* was to return to one fateful week in AD 30. I originally intended its main character to be Pontius Pilate, focusing on his circumstances and the social pressures he faced. However, the story defied that direction. Powerful associations emanated from it in all directions, threatening the accuracy and effect of the literary image, until my intuition counseled me to choose Jesus as the main character of the unmastered novel. When this idea first occurred to me, I became quite scared. Nevertheless, once I had made the choice, it did not allow me to abandon it, and the story about guilt and its redress gained order.

In the unfinished text that permeates the book, I chose for Jesus an image that was not strictly according to the Gospels. He is portrayed as a philosopher coming from David's lineage with an irrevocable mission in a Jerusalem that is expecting the Messiah. The text of the incomplete novel ends at the moment of Jesus' condemnation, and

the Lord of the Tower—or rather his spirit—picks up the threads of his unfinished novel and takes up Jesus' cross.

The second book that came to mind in contemplating the meaning of the Peace Palace was my novel about Czech religious reformer Jan Hus, (c. 1369-1415) a book that I began to write after I returned from jail. My initial motive in writing this book was to find a striking pattern in Czech history during those days of great decline. At the same time, I wanted to purge Hus' personality from a multitude of false interpretations. The book is both fictional and non-fictional. Without a plot, I wrote strictly from historical sources and Jan Hus' writings in order to give the most precise image possible of Hus' religious contention with the church of his day which resulted in his becoming one of the founders of the Reformation.

If in *The Lord of the Tower* Jesus is the projective figure with whom I had difficulty coping, the book about Jan Hus let me experience the figure of Jesus as my own personal discovery. For Hus, Christ was not a mere symbol of religious ceremonies; he experienced Christ directly through a real transformation that takes place during the Eucharist. Christ was for him a living person, a practical role model for daily life, and he interpreted the Gospels as direct instructions for action.

In a theory of the church which Hus was the first to elaborate, Christ is its head, and Hus appealed to Christ as to a judge against the evil pope. He persisted in this appeal even in front of the Council of Constance (1414-18). Because of his deep personal relationship with Christ, he endured the mockery of the church fathers at the Council and identified himself with Christ, even when tied to the stake. As a woman raised in the Renaissance and Enlightenment tradition, I had to deal with Jan Hus' Platonic way of thinking. Learning to understand the essence of Hus' decision-making and the foundation of his religious reformation became a joyous discovery.

Even before I visited the Peace Palace, I did not doubt that there were holy places. There was and still is Mount Moria. Hus' Prague also has its sacred places. I learned that there are quiet places where God speaks, places that are not necessarily connected with great

spiritual or historical turning points. However, as I was looking at the hills lining the horizon across the valley from the Peace Palace, which is so perfectly set into the mountainside, the vista seemed to me to be the epitome of earthly beauty.

I also realized something of my own internal reality. At the sight of the snow-white appearance of the Peace Palace, with its snow-white stone staircases, colonnades, central building and dome, I recalled the quantity of literature I had studied while working on *The Lord of the Tower*. I included a drawing of the Temple in Jerusalem, of which only the Western Wall remains, in order to give the story as authentic a setting as possible. The shape was very similar to the one I was looking at.

This small outward impulse helped me realize that a writer makes seismographic recordings of underground social upheavals through intuition, talent and the awakening of one's subconscious memory. Thus, a book's topics need not be objectively distant from the writer. As I entered the pristine courtyard of the Peace Palace and looked at the staircases that resembled the staircases of Solomon's temple, I was touched by the silent and perhaps already sacred scenery.

After the precious experience of directly meeting Rev. Moon and sincerely attempting to empathize with his vision, I realized that both of these books were personal inquiries. In these books, it wasn't the Lord of the Tower or Jan Hus but me who was searching for myself. Yes, in exploring critical moments of history, sometimes the writer seems to be giving voice to something that is asking to be written. But without recognizing it, the writer is often writing about his or her own crisis and quest. It was only too obvious that one circle along the way was being completed.

PROF. LIANYING WANG

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FROM OCTOBER 13-16, 2006, my wife and I attended the Fifth World Assembly of the Mongolian Peoples' Federation for World Peace in Seoul, Korea. During the conference, Dr. Sun Myung Moon invited all participants to a luncheon held at his beautiful Peace Palace in the Korean hills. There he delivered an excellent speech. His speech was neither an ordinary speech nor the type of speech a national leader or president would make. It was a speech given on behalf of God, conveying God's will.

My wife, Zhang Shuyun, is a senior physician at Nankai University Hospital and a senior master of Qigong, the Chinese practice of working with the breath to promote health. She is an experienced spiritualist whose psychic senses are open. She is often aware of spiritual phenomena as it intersects with our physical world. While Rev. Moon was speaking, she saw a great shining light fill the room and observed the presence of many spirits. She saw that a bright, golden light was shining upward from that place into Heaven, and she became aware that the Peace Palace was at the center of a great spiritual vortex, or portal, through which spirits could easily come and go from the spiritual world. Like acupuncture points on the human body, such places exist here and there on the planet and facilitate communication between the physical and spiritual worlds.

As Dr. Moon was speaking, Zhang Shuyun saw that there was a conference taking place in the spiritual world at the same time. The power of Dr. Moon's words united heaven, earth and mankind and integrated them in oneness. Dr. Moon explained that all people have an eternal home and eternal parents. We are all the descendents of God, God's children. If we want to return to our eternal home and

live with our eternal parents, then we need to cultivate ourselves. We have to elevate our own cosmic energy.

That evening, Zhang Shuyun brought one Unificationist couple to her Seoul hotel room for a guided meditation exercise, as they were curious about her psychic abilities and she was confident she could share with them a vision of the spiritual world. Through the meditation, she took them both into the spiritual world. The wife, who was the more spiritually open of the two, was able to travel to Heaven and see a great white palace, similar to the Peace Palace, and True Parents seated on thrones and smiling at her.

Dr. Moon tells us clearly that in addition to the visible material world there is an invisible, supra-material world. That means a spiritual world. The spiritual world is divided into yang and yin areas, or heaven and hell. The material world and supra-material world are linked together. The material world actually emanates from the supra-material world. All things come from God; human beings originated from God. To worship God's spirit is to worship our Ancestor.

Dr. Moon's speech revealed that struggles among nations, religions, different cultures and different concepts are all because we are apart from God, separated from True Parents. In order to resolve such struggles and create a lasting world of peace, we have to return back to True Parents' side to be with God and follow God's will.

Those whose spiritual eyes are open can see the reality of Dr. Moon's teachings for themselves, especially if they have the privilege of visiting the Peace Palace.

SPIRITUAL MEDALS

DR. CARLOS ENRIQUE PEÑA

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WHEN I TRAVELED TO Seoul for the World Assembly of the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) in 2006, I was inspired by an immense curiosity about what I considered to be a world-level work being undertaken by Rev. Sun Myung Moon and his wife, supported by their children and grandchildren. This goal is the preservation of our most fundamental values as social beings, whose primary and most essential roots are the family and its integration with the community and nation to accomplish the fundamental goal of world peace.

Excited at the opportunity to come to know the main actors in such a wonderful project, I listened to Father Moon's speech. Sitting among people from many different religions and creeds, I understood that the message of faith, higher religious concepts and religious philosophical understanding expressed by Father Moon was the same one that guides the traditional Christian churches, as it does others that have the same foundations but use different names.

His message upholds the same concepts and words of Jesus; it is just the presentation that is different. I understood that this man dedicated part of his life to studying and comparing the biblical and post-biblical texts, drawing together the threads of religious history from the time of Jesus Christ until the present in order to express, with such ease, the philosophy of the word of God; this is what

makes him so special. Father Moon has been called to mould into a single line of thought the whole message of the Bible for the greater edification of the religious traditions of the peoples of the world.

This thought can be communicated beyond national borders to people of other religions, races and colors. This message is really the word of God. It calls for the consolidation of the most fundamental values that allow people to become better and to fulfill what the commandments require of us as good Christians.

I felt much admiration for Father Moon, his message and his words. This was more than a speech; it was the expression of the feelings of a man fuelled by an inner power.

I had the immense privilege to be by his side, as well as next to his wife, when I came to the stage to confer upon him the honorary doctorate degree on behalf of the University of Santa María, of which I am vice-rector, in Caracas, Venezuela. I had the privilege to give him the parchment scroll accrediting him as a Doctor of Law.

While pinning on him the medal, a special moment occurred, the memory of which will never leave me. When I was in front of Father Moon, dressed in my gown and mortarboard, on my chest were the many medals and ribbons that I have obtained throughout thirty years of undergraduate and graduate teaching. Father Moon smiled at me and said, "You have many medals on your chest," to which I replied, "Although you may not have them at this time on your gown, I am very sure that you have medals on your chest which are more numerous and more deserved than mine." This comment delighted him.

Independent of the religious and theological aspects, one point deserves special attention. This is the theme of world peace and what the UPF is doing to re-establish common interests among warring peoples. I have arrived at a great conclusion.

There are, on our planet, organizations promoting the escalation of crises between peoples to the point of war, there are men perfecting the techniques of war in order to control more people, and there are corporations constructing ever more sophisticated weapons to assure the accomplishment of the goals of each conflict.

Yet, on a worldwide level, there are very few initiatives coming from public organizations and from NGOs to counteract the advancement of hatred and wars between peoples. We observe with sadness that while diplomats from organizations such as the Organization of American States and the United Nations pretend to live a life of brotherhood and unity among the nations, their behaviors show them to be Pharisees and hypocrites. The nature of the game is that the mask of harmony among colleagues is quickly cast aside when national and other interests are threatened, and people quickly become bitter and distant enemies.

Because of this, organizations such as the Universal Peace Federation should be widely recognized for the work that they are doing around the planet. UPF's objectives are very clear: the peaceful coexistence and equality of peoples and nations. I believe that what the UPF is doing deserves the respect of all the inhabitants of this planet. If some day, as Father Moon says, we can live the dream of beginning a trip from Patagonia, at the tip of South America, and then travel without being hindered by borders to the eastern hemisphere of this planet, all of us and our children will happily understand that the work of mankind is not to destroy but to build up.

If people in this world can give everything to ensure that human beings can live in peace with their neighbors and if governments can give more to those who have less without taking from them what they have earned, then the principles of true social justice will operate for the benefit of all peoples, promoting better relationships among everyone and the larger common interests. Hopefully, this will be so.

As an academic, I think one of the quickest ways to achieve coexistence, besides the work being done by the UPEF, is to create a faculty of peace in institutions of higher education. In all nations, it should be obligatory to teach people how to promote peace and avoid war. We should sow in the developing minds of our youth the most fundamental principles of peace and coexistence: that harmony begins with ourselves and then expands to our families, our communities and the nations of the world.

Perhaps some day we may understand that there need not be another world war which will destroy mankind and all we have done, but that we will become the guardians of our own security and establish a new international order. When we can understand that this is possible, I am sure that the spirit of cooperation, humanitarian aid and selfless giving will rise within the people of the world and flow beyond the borders that divide nations. When the banner of peace becomes the standard that identifies nations and when the interests of each nation become the common interests of all mankind, then we will be able to say that the battle has been won.

Someone said that the third world war may be fought over water. Why don't we begin working now to avoid this, so that nations will not need to invade others to secure supplies of water? Why don't we encourage the stewardship of productive and healthy forests instead of destroying them? These are things we should be doing now, because tomorrow is today. Because mankind has been destroying its own habitat, when we no longer have the natural resources to assure our survival, war will break out. This we must avoid.

Hopefully, my reflections about what we can do to bequeath the work of UPF to future generations, far from wounding sensitivities or creating unattainable expectations, will arouse our conscience about what should be done. If this comes to pass, I will feel deeply proud.

LIFE OF PRAYER AND DEVOTION

DR. EMMANUEL D. BEZZINA

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ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS, BE THEY religious, political, social, commercial or cultural, have always had an aversion towards inspirations, innovations and initiatives that come from outside their established circles. Dr. Sun Myung Moon is a living assertion, like Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Teresa were in their time, that with determination and perseverance a resourceful person not only can stand up to an established culture, but over the years equal and then surpass it.

Since the latter part of 1998, when I first came in contact with Father Moon and his work in my own country of Malta, I have had the undeserved honor of participating in a number of national and international conferences and convocations, seminars, study groups and informal analytical meetings, all organized by and deeply associated with Father Moon's spiritual, philanthropic and humanitarian convictions.

In most of these international meetings, Father Moon is deeply engaged in his spiritual dimension and capacity. People feel his human presence and charisma even though he usually delivers his speeches in the Korean language, which few of us understand directly. Although he uses a prepared script, he always departs from it and is so obviously in his own element, communicating his spiritual thoughts and visions. When I see him investing passionately

in this way, I am assured that his principal concern is the welfare of his fellow brothers and sisters; he definitely lives for the sake of others.

But what about when he is out of the public eye? While in Korea recently, I had the opportunity to attend an early prayer meeting at Rev. and Mrs. Moon's residence in Seoul. There I discovered that even when the big conferences are over and the crowds of invited guests have gone home, Father Moon's enthusiasm for spiritual debates, dialogues and discourses never ceases. Though he may be the founder of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, the Universal Peace Federation and many other organizations, it is his life of devotion and prayer that most eloquently testifies to me what it is to be the True Parent.

I have seen Father Moon in the role of a devoted and respectful husband to Mother Moon, and the couple seem closer in love than many newlyweds. In addition, he is a dedicated, disciplined and loving father and grandfather to their children and grandchildren. Perhaps that much is to be expected, but what I also notice is that he treats everyone just the same, whether they are meeting him for the first time or have known him their whole life.

What a moving, heart-warming sight that is! His message is simple in its forceful poignancy: without wholesome families, society cannot prosper and move forward; states will not be strong without an infrastructure based on authentic family values. At a time when the world at large appears to be losing sight of this essential truth, Father Moon is showing us by living example how we can make a lasting peace.

Through their holistic way of life, Rev. and Mrs. Moon embody all that is encompassed in the term parenthood. They totally and unconditionally give of themselves and live for the sake of not only their immediate family but also for all brothers and sisters in this global village, always expanding the realm of peace. They are True Parents.

GRASPING THE NATURE OF GOD

DR. KLAUS ROHMANN

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NICHOLAS OF CUSA (1401-64) was a harbinger of a new era. Named after his native town Cues on the Moselle [Germany], he attended the school of the Brethren of Common Life in Deventer in the Netherlands, whose so-called modern way of piety influenced him deeply. He then studied law at Heidelberg Padua, and Cologne, and became a great expert in canon law. After practicing law for several years, he studied theology and became a priest.

Made a cardinal in 1448, he was engaged in reforming the monasteries in Germany and the Netherlands. When he was appointed as Bishop of Brixen, he became involved in a political conflict with Sigismund, Duke of Tyrol, who finally forced Nicholas to resign.

In his own time, Nicholas played an important role as an actor in church policies as an inspiring natural scientist, theologian and philosopher. He is not only a great thinker at the boundary of the Middle Ages and modern times who overthrew scholasticism, but also a man who greatly influenced the course of theology and philosophy.

His central issue, as discussed in his main work, *On Learned Ignorance*, was the problem of the knowledge of God, or of the Absolute

Infinite. How is it possible for finite beings to approach the infinite God?

According to Nicholas, God is ineffable beyond all affirmations and negations. This is the extreme climax of a philosophical theology where the infinite distance between God and the finite has come to a head. More exactly, human beings cannot touch God through knowledge at all, but at the very most only by our yearning for Him.

Paul Tillich admitted that this medieval thinker had greatly occupied his thought. He asserted that Nicholas's thesis of the coincidence of opposites is essential to all metaphysics. It differs from the usual opinion that God is in heaven and only acts in the world by means of his deeds. The Divine is present in all that is natural and human. It is not a realm transcending life, but a dimension of life itself, claims Tillich.

I want to figure out whether the concept of unity, as formulated by Nicholas of Cusa, may explain or even clarify the teachings of Rev. Moon. I recall that the Divine Principle uses Asian models to illustrate the relationship between God, the world and human beings, namely the polarity of *yang* and *yin* or, to put it in Korean, of *yang* and *eum*, and the corresponding structure of *sung-sang* [internal character] and *hyung-sang* [external form].

Heart is the inner kernel of God's nature. It is not only beyond the original *hyung-sang*, God's external attributes, which include the Universal Prime Energy and matter, but also the original *sung-sang*, which embraces emotion, intellect and will and as well law and concepts. The *Outline of the Principle* explains:

Heart is the most vital part of His nature, such that all other attributes in Him are what they are and act solely because of this attribute. All other attributes whatsoever are conditioned and sustained by this force. And it is the most vital part of His nature.

A central theme of Unification Thought is the understanding that God may suffer because of the suffering of his creation. In the second edition of *Unification Theology* of 1987, Unificationist scholar Young

Oon Kim writes on the heart of God. However, Kim only centers on God's feeling and asserts that all theological deliberation must start with this. She does not feel at ease with the traditional attribute of God's omnipotence. She obviously associates this term with apathy or impassibility. Therefore, she pleads for the conception of a God who is concerned and shares the feeling of our loneliness and intense grief, and who can be hurt by afflictions.

This expression comes very close to the divine quality of "ability-itself" proposed by Nicholas, which imparts the power of existence, life and love to all creation. Nicholas avoided the use of the term omnipotence and even the concept potency. Nicholas not only aims to name the maximum power to do something and all, but also to name the ability to be affected and even to suffer. "For with God nothing is impossible." (Luke 1:37)

Nicholas of Cusa and Sun Myung Moon have in common the passion for unity in many aspects of life. Their concern is far from being a mere theoretical enterprise. I would like to call to mind the fact that Nicholas conceived his idea of the "coincidence of opposites" when he sailed back from a mission in Constantinople. It was not only the majestic experience of the Mediterranean Sea that stimulated Nicholas to think of God as the Absolute Infinite embracing all things. He was also animated by his wish to unite mankind in a common belief. He felt pain that humanity was divided and passionately tried to find a common base for belief in Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

Nicholas of Cusa was also very busy to preserve or restore ecclesiastical unity. All this proves that the idea of the coincidence of opposites not only results from scholarly reasoning, but arose out of practical affairs. In a similar way, Sun Myung Moon is concerned with the unity of religions, with the unity of the sciences, of science and religion, of economy and religion, and of the unity of all mankind in peace.

There is another striking similarity between Nicholas of Cusa and Moon which perhaps appears odd to a modern western mind: both have a decided liking for the symbolism of numbers.

According to Divine Principle, the numbers 2, 3 and 4 are of importance. There is a polarity within God. Man, created in the image of God, and all things, which resemble God symbolically, are in a similar polar position, in a reciprocal relationship of giving and taking. The origin of both subject partner and object partner and their resulting union set up four beings. Each takes a subject relationship to the other three. Thus, the "three-objects standard" is formed. When God as the origin of all, the divided subject partner and object partner, and their union accomplish their three-objects standard, they build a "four-position foundation" [husband, wife and children, centered on God]. This foundation ultimately involves six different give-and-take relationships.

Nicholas of Cusa was deeply interested in mathematics and attached great value and certainty to mathematical knowledge. Since he so intensively contemplated the issue of infinity, it is not surprising that he is considered to be an important primogenitor of infinitesimal calculus.

Evidence shows that among all numbers with symbolic meaning, two of them have a particular significance: 1 and 3. One is indivisible, it contains no root, is the basis of all other numbers, and the fundamental unity in all. And, as we have seen, there are only 3 operations to bring every process of unfolding to a certain completion (i.e., the processes from 1 to 10, from 10 to 100, and from 100 to 1,000). According to Nicholas, both 1 and 3 are the most important tools to explain the world and disclose the relationship between God and creation. His most significant categories are unity and trinity.

If God endures all in Himself, where all is enveloped, and if there is no "otherness" in God, because it would contradict His infinity, then God senses and suffers all sufferings within Himself, who is the "non-other." Grief and pain, then, are not only feelings of other beings but also the emotions of the one who is called the non-other. Thus, God in His inner core comes as close to His creatures, to their mightiness and powerlessness, as thinkable. Nicholas thus pushes the possibility of human thinking so far that it must end up as adoration.

In my opinion, no Christian theologian comes so close to the Unification doctrine of God and creation as Nicholas of Cusa does. So I would recommend that theologians and philosophers of the Unification movement read and study the work of this scholar, perhaps starting with *Vision of God*, the essay I personally like most. It is especially advisable to turn to Nicholas of Cusa, since he is a harbinger of a new era in the history of Christian theology and philosophy. Considering that critics of Unification thought have objected that this religion is but a syncretism between Asian and Protestant thinking and, therefore, a heretical Christian sect, it would seem advisable to demonstrate links to one of the greatest philosophers and theologians in the tradition of mainstream Christianity. Furthermore, he may stimulate Unification philosophers insofar as he was greatly interested in the natural sciences and in mathematics, and Unificationists are themselves concerned with the unity of religion and science.

Note: Excerpted from Dr. Rohmann's full-length essay, "Nicholas of Cusa: His Idea of the Coincidence of Opposites, and the Concept of Unity in Unification Thought," Journal of Unification Studies, Vol. III: 1999-2000.

DR. MICHAEL HIGATSBERGER

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IT WAS ALWAYS AND continues to be Rev. Sun Myung Moon's idea that in science as well as in religion unifying principles should be at a central position of all deliberations, because only through such means can spiritual and physical harmony be realized.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACADEMIC LIFE

DR. PAUL BADHAM

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I WISH TO PAY TRIBUTE to what Rev. Sun Myung Moon has done for academic development in the areas in which I have had personal experience. My first contact was in 1979 when I received an invitation from Nobel Laureate, Sir John Eccles to attend a Conference in Los Angeles on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS) focusing on the relationship between mind and brain. As a young lecturer whose first book owed much to Eccles' thought, I had no hesitation in accepting, though I was puzzled to see that the conference was sponsored by a religious leader, whom I knew to be a controversial figure.

I found the conference absolutely fascinating. I noticed that although many of the brain specialists present supported the mind-brain dualism advocated by Eccles, these were all emeritus professors. Younger scholars favored the alternative of mind-brain unity. However, there was also a session on near-death experiences (NDEs) which seemed to suggest that near the point of death, mind and brain separated; those who had had this experience were convinced that their minds (or souls) would live on after bodily death.

I drew from these different conference sessions the conclusion that if the immortality of the soul were to remain a credible belief it would be better to direct one's research toward NDEs rather than

to conventional brain research. This is what I have subsequently done. My conference contribution was published in the *Journal of Theology* as "Death-bed Visions and the Christian Hope," and over the following twenty years research into NDEs became my primary academic interest leading to a succession of books, articles, and television documentaries, as well as to the supervision of a stream of young doctoral researchers who have made their own contributions to this debate.

The climax of all this endeavor was an ICUS committee in Washington in 1997 on "Life, Death and Eternal Hope," which drew together all the leading researchers in this field and will hopefully lead to a further book.

Rev. Moon has long been concerned to seek ways to bring unity among Christians of different denominations and unity between the world religions. To this he has sponsored a wide variety of conferences, some of which have focused on Christianity and some on world religions. As a professor of both theology and religious studies, it has been my privilege to attend both types of conferences. I have participated in conferences on the challenge of secularization, on feminist theology, on religious pluralism, on the meaning of the doctrine of the incarnation, and on the ecumenical movement.

Some of these conferences have been global, drawing together Christians from across the world to explore the different challenges facing their faith in different cultures. Others have been European in their context. In every case, however, it has been a unique opportunity to meet scholars from Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Calvinist, and other traditions and to explore the diversity of views in contemporary Christianity. The papers have been of a very high standard and in every case the conference has led to a publication. It is hard to think of any comparable foundation which has led to such productive and useful conferences in Christian theology.

The conferences sponsored by Rev. Moon on the wider dimension of world religions have been even more important, because they have made it possible to engage in dialogue across the continents. Scholars from countries like India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, or

Bangladesh often find it economically impossible to attend Religious Studies conferences organized by the normal scholarly associations in the west.

Hence, it is often the case that discussions about Buddhist or Hindu thought are often led by academic scholars of religious texts rather than by participating believers from inside the tradition. This is not so with the God Conferences or the New Era Conferences sponsored by the Unification movement. These enable the authentic voice to be heard.

My own understanding of Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam has been transformed by meeting believers in such faiths at Unification conferences. I find it extraordinary in hindsight that as a student at Cambridge, I took courses in Buddhism and Islam without ever meeting a Muslim or Buddhist. Yet in every case, living religions today often differ profoundly from the impression one can gain simply from reading their classic foundational texts.

This was highlighted for me at the God Conference, which led to my edited book, *Death and Immortality in the Religions of the World*. There was absolutely no doubt that for the Buddhist participants from Thailand, life after death was a central theme of Buddhist thought in which "the consciousness principle" goes on to new life and for which the evidence of near-death experiences is strongly supportive. One can gain a very different picture concerning such issues from western scholars whose knowledge of Buddhism is derived solely from western interpretation of the Pali texts rather than the living encounter with contemporary believers.

Although the historical formulas by which different faiths expound their future hope are very different, such differences are greatly reduced if one looks at how these beliefs are actually interpreted today. For example reincarnation, resurrection, and immortality are historically quite distinct and incompatible beliefs. But if one asks a contemporary Buddhist how he or she understands reincarnation (perhaps as rebirth into Buddha's Pure Land), it may be very similar to the way a contemporary Christian might reinterpret resurrection in terms of getting a "spiritual body" for life in heaven.

My experience of interfaith dialogue at Unification-sponsored conferences has profoundly shaped my thinking on how religious studies should evolve as a discipline. It seems clear to me that if one is to help young people to a knowledge of what other people believe, it is essential that what they are taught corresponds to the actualities of religious belief and practice today. In this context, it is extremely useful if faiths can be taught from within as well as from without. This can sometimes be helped if the lecturers themselves stand within the tradition they teach—although this must never be a condition of appointment. Academic study requires the prohibition of religious tests.

What one can seek to do is to ensure that there are no negative religious tests in which there is actually a prejudice against a believer teaching his or her own religion. Thus, it is important that each religion be studied from the perspective of what matters to a believer in that religion. This can be implemented if the lecturer concerned participates in interfaith dialogue or visits communities in which the religion is alive. I am personally conscious of just how great my debt is to the Unification movement in introducing me to believers across a wide spectrum of the religious experience of humanity.

I vividly recall three conferences. One was concerned with the role of religion in the troubles of Northern Ireland. Another was concerned with "Religion, State and Society in Modern Britain." This latter conference led to my book of the same title which drew together for the first time chapters from each Christian denomination in Britain, separate chapters on the different situations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, as well as coverage of the new black-led churches, the sects, and new religious movements and the Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, Sikh and Hindu communities in Britain.

Because the Unification movement has attracted much controversy, some people have criticized scholars who have been willing to attend them. I do not think such criticisms are in any way justified, because—in fact much of the criticism of the Unification movement is based on misinformation.

The most glaring example of this is the oft repeated claim that Unificationists have all been “brainwashed” into believing. This claim has been subject to the most searching investigation by many of the world’s leading sociologists of religion and has been found to be without foundation. None of the highly intelligent young Unificationists whom I have known for twenty years could possibly be described as brainwashed. Many have obtained doctorates at famous universities.

All the conference series are explicitly designed to draw together into dialogue people with different viewpoints and who come from different belief systems. In the nature of the case, very few of the actual conference participants are members of the Unification movement, and Rev. Moon has always made it clear that participation in such conferences in no way implies any kind of endorsement for his views. This is always explicitly stated in the literature associated with such conferences. It seems to me important that one should be willing to collaborate with others in worthwhile ventures in areas where there is common ground, even if in other areas there may be differences.

The one proviso for any academic in participating in any conference is that one’s own academic freedom and integrity must never be compromised. I have found that this proviso has always been honored by the Unification movement in their relationship with me.

I found clearest evidence for the openness of the Unification movement towards academics when I attended two conferences devoted to Unification thought and belief. I felt I ought to inform myself properly about what the movement’s own belief system was.

During these conferences, I made it clear that—as an Anglican priest—I disagreed with many of the distinctive beliefs of the *Divine Principle* as presented to us. In fact I drew on my expertise as a Christian theologian and church historian to ask searching questions of those conducting the sessions. I was always treated with the utmost courtesy and it was clear that we agreed to differ. Nevertheless, in view of the sharpness of my critique I was quite surprised and very

impressed when further invitations came to participate in the more general conference series.

In the academic world today, attendance at conferences is recognized to be of great importance for the intellectual growth and development of the university teacher. Nevertheless, funding for such conferences is extremely tight, and this is particularly the case in relation to international and interdisciplinary conferences. Therefore, the academic world in general and the world of religious studies in particular is greatly indebted to the Unification movement for the support which they have freely given.

I realize that there may be things said in other chapters with which I would wish to differ, and my agreement to participate in the festschrift as a whole must not be taken as any kind of endorsement of what may be said elsewhere in this book by those closer than I am to the Unification system of beliefs and values. But I believe in what I have said in this chapter. I wish to pay tribute to a benefactor whose generosity in sponsoring conferences has greatly enhanced my life, and that of a large network of other scholars whom I have come to know through these conferences. Many of those who are now close friends were first met on Unification-sponsored conferences. Much that I know and value in other world faiths was initially stimulated and encouraged by what I learnt in such conferences.

A PRECIOUS TREASURE

SHEIKH DR. AHMAD KUFTARO (1915-2004)

Grand Mufti of Syria (1964-2004)

ALL OF US ARE aware of the catastrophes and calamities that took place in the twentieth century and the major wars and regional conflicts that worked for the misery and suffering of humanity. Despite the efforts of leaders, politicians, and philosophers, and despite the creation of the League of Nations and the United Nations, we all know that man has not been able to achieve the peace that he has always longed for.

Global peace cannot be achieved except by Allah, God, whose name in the Qur'an means peace. God is peace and peace is God, and no peace can be achieved except by God. All the programs laid by God through his prophets and apostles through the passage of history should be unified into one, and then peace can be achieved. If divine religions unify their forces and join hands together, then God will be with them and peace will come. Prophet Mohammed says in his tradition, "The hand of God is with the unified community" and, "The wolf eats the sheep that goes away from its flock."

The Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace is an expression of the essential meaning of the messages of heaven. The goal of religions should be to bring all into one family, into one body, so that if an ailment takes place in one limb, the whole body will have sleeplessness and fever for the sake of that ailed limb.

For forty years now, I have been calling for the unification of religions and for their fraternity. I have been calling for that in my

homeland as well as all over the world, in conferences, and wherever I went and lectured. I was always living for this dream. This hope of mine has always driven me to look where I could find its treasures and gems. And now I have found the treasure, represented by Father Moon.

He has laid the foundation stone and he is the engineer to bring about unification through this interreligious federation. I cannot express how much I rejoice in meeting with this great treasure. My heart, my self, is filled with a great feeling with which I cannot dispense. I believe that this century will not pass away before all religions unite, accomplishing world peace and fraternity. I feel that it will not pass before this comes into light under the patronage of my brother, Father Moon. The seeds for our unification are already there in our religions, but they have to grow and prosper so that all mankind can attain brotherhood and love.

PROF. OBEDIAH MPFURUTSA

Chairman, Technical Commercial College, Zimbabwe

CHURCH LEADERS (INCLUDING FOUNDERS of various denominations) talk about their religions and denominations and why they are better than other religions. Rev. Moon is a different man. His main mission is to unite the entire world regardless of religion, location or nationality. He encourages unity among religions and discourages religious wars. Uniting political leaders is the way to eliminate political conflicts among groups and nations. And by promoting family values, he is actually promoting peace—because I believe peace begins within each individual. His approach to peace is a God-driven approach, and that is the best approach.

THE DAYS OF MESSIAH IN JUDAISM

DR. SHUKI Y. BEN AMI

President, World Media Association, Israel

FROM THE FIRST TIME I became acquainted with Rev. Sun Myung Moon and his thought, *The Divine Principle*, a new dimension of divine revelation opened before me. Rev. Moon's vision relates to the Jewish concept of *tikun olam*, or "restoring the world into the Kingdom of God."

The concept of the Messiah is central to universal salvation. The different commentaries regarding his essence and his identity lead to conflicts whose need for settlement is more vital today than ever before. In order to understand the significance of the Messiah, we will relate how it is perceived in Judaism.

The term "Messiah" originates from the Hebrew root *MSH*, which refers to being anointed or an ointment. *Mish'ha* refers to a man sanctified for his role by pouring on his head anointing oil, which was prepared in a special way revealed to Moses by God. (Ex 30:22-25)

Priests, kings and prophets were anointed with oil. Aaron was the first to be anointed, and later his sons were anointed as priests. In the Hebrew text of Lev. 3 and 4, the *cohen* (priest) is called the messiah.

The first anointing of a king is found in Judges 9:7-20. The Hebrew text says that when David was chased by King Saul, he called the king

"the Lord's Messiah." Saul, David, Absalom, Solomon, Hazael (the king of Aram), Yehu, Yoash (the king of Judea) and Jehoahaz were all anointed with anointing oil. Cyrus, the king of Persia, was also called "Messiah." (Isaiah 45:1)

Since the royal dynasty was given to the house of David forever, the Messiah who is to save the people of Israel in the last days will be from his offspring. Daniel prophesied about the coming of the Messiah (9:24-26) and used coded numbers that have become a fertile ground for end-of-days speculators, especially Christians, who tried to see in his prophecy the first coming of the lord.

According to Jewish tradition, the personality of the Messiah is not as important as the expected salvation. The Messiah is a human being, born to human parents. He is an exemplary and exceptional person, but not the only son of God; neither is he a heavenly creature or a supernatural being. A potential Messiah is hidden in every generation, but he will become substantial only when God concludes that the generation deserves it. In Jewish prayers the word, "Messiah" does not appear; however, terms like "the shoot of David" are common.

Jesus himself didn't use the term "Messiah"; he referred to himself as the "Son of Man," which recalls a term in Daniel 7 and The Book of Enoch in the Pseudepigrapha. The "Son of Man" (a term meaning "human being" in Aramaic or "son of Adam" in Hebrew) was described as a wonderful figure, a judge who sits at the right hand of the throne in the last days and distinguishes between the saints who will inherit eternal life and the wicked who will go to eternal hell.

The link between the Messiah and the First Adam is also found in the Talmud. Reish Lakish, one of the sages of the Talmud, thought that the spirit of the First Adam, the spirit that God breathed into his nostrils, is identical to the Spirit of God that hovered on the waters (Genesis 1:2) and will descend on the offshoots of Jesse (Isaiah 11:2). This same idea can be found in the writings of Paul.

The Sages of Israel spoke of two Messiahs: the son of Josef, son of Rachel, who establishes a national framework and gathers the

nation; and the son of David, from Judah's tribe, the son of Leah. In one of the Qumran Scrolls even three Messiahs are mentioned simultaneously: Messiah from Aaron (priesthood), Messiah from David's house (kingship) and Messiah from Israel.

The sages saw a hint of the days of the Messiah in excerpts from the Torah heralding Israel's return from exile: "That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee" (Deuteronomy 30:3).

Many of the prophets give hints regarding the days of the Messiah. Isaiah who talked about world peace: "And it shall come to pass in the last days... And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more..." (2:2-4).

The Talmud sages discussed the difference between the days of the present world and the days of the Messiah, especially whether the changes that would take place in the world in the days of the Messiah would be accompanied by changes in the natural order.

Rabbi Hiya Bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: "all the prophets have prophesied only regarding the days of the Messiah, however regarding the essence of the next world: 'no eye has seen it but yours almighty God.'" Rabbi Samuel said: "there is no difference between this world and the days of the Messiah but the enslavement of kingdoms" (Sanhedrin 99, Berahot 34). Rabbi Yohanan thought that all prophecies related to the future, such as: "And they shall beat their swords into plowshares..." or "and the wolf shall dwell with the lamb" as well as: "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun..." (Isaiah 30:26), relate to the days of the Messiah.

Since they do not fit with the ways of the world, it implies that during the days of the Messiah the order of nature would change. Thus, reality in the days of the Messiah would be different from that in the present life in our world.

Rabbi Samuel rejected this idea, claiming that during the days of the Messiah the world would continue as before, and there would

be no changes in the order of nature. The only change would be the delivery from enslavement by foreign kingdoms.

Rabbi Moses Maimonides is considered the greatest among Jewish sages. In *The Laws of the King Mashiach* (chapter 12) he adopts Rabbi Samuel's assertion and says: "One should never think that in the days of the Messiah the world would act out of the ordinary...as the sages have said there is no difference between this world and the days of the Messiah except for the ... days of freedom and independence during which the world would not suffer from wars or hunger...and the world's only business would be knowing God."

In his tractate *Sanhedrin* chapter 10, Maimonides says: "and the Messiah will die and his son will reign and his son's son...." In other words, not only will the Messiah be mortal but he will also pass on his Messianic dynasty to his sons.

Zachariah prophesied that in the days before the Messiah, Armageddon will take place. Malachi prophesied that Elijah would come before the arrival of the Messiah. Maimonides said in this regard: "in the beginning of the days of the Messiah there will be the Armageddon and prior to the Armageddon a prophet will come to prepare the hearts of Israel as was said 'I shall send you Elijah...who is not coming to defile the pure and not to purify the defiled and not to disqualify anyone... but to place peace in the world as was said and he brought the hearts of the fathers back to their sons...'" (*The Laws of the King*, chapter 12).

Daniel prophesied: "The son of man came with the clouds of heaven" (7:13), while Zechariah prophesied that he would come "poor and riding a donkey" (9:9). The Talmud tried to settle this contradiction. Rabbi Alexandrei, in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Levi, said: "If we will be worthy, his coming will be glorious," in the clouds of Heaven. If we will not be worthy, he will come "as a beggar riding a donkey." The sages of Israel found in this prophecy another hint of the Messiah working to establish world peace. The donkey is the opposite of the war horse mentioned in verse ten.

If I had to point the one cardinal difference between Judaism and Christianity, I would quote John the Baptist's question, "Are

you the one or shall we wait for another?" Christianity asserts that the Messiah came two thousand years ago, died on the cross and was resurrected from the dead after three days. Then he revealed himself to his disciples, rose to Heaven and promised to return. Some streams in Christianity see the return of the Israelites to their homeland as a stage leading to the second coming of Jesus.

Judaism, on the other hand, believes in the future Messiah that is yet to come. Jews wait for his coming every day and thus deny that Jesus was the Messiah. Both Christians and Jews believe that the Messiah's origins are in David's dynasty. They both expect him to be revealed, the Christians at his second coming and the Jews at his first and absolute one.

The *Divine Principle* clarifies the true meaning of the original sin. Its assertions are strongly supported by the Jewish Kabbalistic writings. Understanding the true meaning of the original sin clarifies how humankind failed, why we need salvation, and the role of the Messiah.

The first cosmic family failed to observe the sacred family codes and was tainted with fornication and murder, thus giving birth to torn and divided humankind. A society whose failure is rooted in the original sin and which is characterized from its very inception by blood and killings can only be rebuilt and saved by removing the sin and establishing a reformed society based on true families and true fraternal relations. World harmony can only be restored through deliverance from this bloody satanic cycle that was inflicted on mankind from its birth. Only then will the messianic salvation that is so needed come.

A true understanding of the term "Messiah" can purify us from the blemish embedded in our blood and remove the barriers to unity and understanding among the monotheistic religions. We have to first understand the mission of the Messiah and later the personality fulfilling this role. As Rev. Moon explains that the Messiah's mission is to become a true Adam and fulfill the role of the first Adam who failed. He must establish a wholesome human family and then restore a wholesome world.

"Messiah," therefore, means "driving Satan out of our lives and becoming one world family, restored and based on harmony and peace." This forges the way for erecting the kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Rev. Moon's teachings and activities are the fulfillment of the visions of Israel's prophets regarding the last days. They give practical meaning to the ancient Jewish prayer: "and they all made one bundle to do your will whole heartedly." If we have the courage and wisdom to look into his deeds, we will realize that the "Last Days" are already here and that we are in their midst. Thus, we will qualify to receive the revelation of the Messiah "with the clouds of Heaven."

KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS

DR. CLINTON BENNETT

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JESUS SAID, "BEWARE OF false prophets ... you recognize them by the fruits they bear ... a good tree always yields good fruit." This passage has been applied by Christians to Muhammad (peace be upon him), to Joseph Smith (the Mormon prophet) and by some to Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Unification movement and of the Seminary that employs me.

Shortly after starting to work at the Unification Theological Seminary (UTS), I contacted an official of the American Baptist Churches to ask how, as an ordained Baptist, I might contribute to Baptist life in the area. The official wrote back saying that his heart sank when he realized that I was "with the Moonies," and that he would not help me "infiltrate our churches with this cult."

I was hurt by this response. Later, he wrote that he could not understand how, if I was a Christian, I could work for the Moonies and that he had had bad experiences of Moonies claiming endorsement for their views from well-respected Christians who had merely attended one of their meetings out of curiosity.

A number of issues require addressing. First, are the "Moonies" a cult? All sorts of religious groups have been regarded as cults (even

we Baptists were called a sect when we began) and quite a few are now regarded as respectable, although not necessarily mainstream.

One example is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (the Mormons), founded by Joseph Smith, who saw himself as having done more than Jesus to keep his Church together; yet there are now almost as many Saints in the world as Jews, including fifteen members of the U.S. Congress. They are renowned for their high moral standards, family values, community service and caring for each other. Doesn't it say somewhere, "they will know we are Christians by our love"? (See John 13: 35)

Christians from the start saw Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a false prophet. They still accuse him of sexual misconduct, but almost one third of humanity reveres Muhammad as the Last Prophet. Muslims also believe, as does Moon, that Jesus did not complete his mission. Smith and Moon, too, like Muhammad, have been accused of sexual misconduct. Smith told his followers that he never claimed to be perfect, but there was "no error in the revelations which I have taught."

So, are the Moonies a cult? Although there is no generally accepted definition, a cult is thought to exercise total control over its members, to prevent them from leaving. They are said to have authoritarian leadership. But I know members who have left or who have been asked to leave. Incidentally, if the Unificationists have mastered the technique of brain-washing, every intelligence agency would be lining up to learn their secret!

The Moonies I know, and my contact with the movement goes back to 1986 are caring, compassionate, humane, family-centered people who do not abuse alcohol, smoke, or advocate free-sex but who believe in the unity of the human race and ending war and injustice. Rev. Moon's goal is a unified world of peace, the hope of all ages.

I was raised believing that the Roman Catholic Church, with its top-down leadership and extra-Biblical doctrines, was a cult. J. Oswald Saunders' *Cults and Isms* (Arrowsmith, 1980) describes the Catholic Church as "a cult alongside the Mormons, Christian Science,

the Christadelphians!" I do not agree with every aspect of Roman Catholic doctrine, but I have worked with Catholics throughout my ministry. I do not agree with every aspect of what Rev. Moon believes, nor has anyone ever asked me to. I used to work for a metropolitan city council, but I did not support all the council's policies. Were I to work for a Roman Catholic college, I would not be expected to accept all the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.

In the end, God will judge whether anyone who claims to have a message from God—such as Muhammad or Smith or Moon—is a true and faithful servant, or a charlatan. However, through the words of Jesus, God gives pragmatic advice—we can judge people by their fruits. Jesus also said, in Luke 6:46, "Why do you call me Lord, Lord and not do the things I say?"

Neither soundness of doctrine nor moral conduct redeems us; neither are any of us perfect. We are all sinners in the process of being redeemed. Paul said that the good he wanted to do, he didn't do; but instead, he did the wrong he did not want to do (Romans 7:14). This is true of all of us, but God is able to work through us, despite our failings. Smith himself reasoned that the *Book of Mormon* was of God because "all things which are good cometh of Christ," and the devil "persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him."

Rev. Moon says that he is the Messiah. This is a matter of deep concern for many Christians. Is this why I should not teach at the accredited Seminary he founded? Were I offered a job at a Muslim college, as a life-long scholar of Islam I would jump at the opportunity—yet Muslims do not believe that Jesus died on the Cross and rose again to redeem all humanity, even though they do call him Messiah. In fact, the majority of New Testament scholars are skeptical whether Jesus actually thought that he was the Messiah, seeing this as a title bestowed on him by the early church. The most commonly held view today among Jews is that the Messiah will liberate Jerusalem, rebuild the Temple, re-establish the Sanhedrin (Isaiah 1:26) and reign over the world with universal peace and

justice. There is still war in the world, and injustice. Jesus has come but world peace still eludes us.

Moses Maimonides thought that the coming of the Messiah would bring justice to the Jews but would not otherwise impact on the order of the world. Many Reform or progressive Jews do not believe in the Messiah as a person but in the Messianic age that is to come, and towards which we are called to work. The Reform rabbis gathering in Ohio in 1937 wrote: "We regard it as our historic task to co-operate with all men in the establishment of the Kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, justice, truth and peace on earth. This," they said, "is our messianic goal."

When Rev. Moon speaks of himself as Messiah, it is not as a boast but within the context of a huge task that all humanity needs must shoulder. "Your mission and that of heaven," he tells his followers, "is to join hands with us in building a peaceful Kingdom of Heaven on this earth." Rev. Moon teaches that, "The will of Heaven resides in human peace grounded in true families, not in the progress of any particular church or religion" but in pure love between all peoples. We should all live for the sake of others, he says.

This may be ambitious, but if good people stand by and do nothing, evil will surely triumph (as Edmund Burke put it). Sometimes, thinking big is just what God wants of us. David brought down Goliath. A man in a loin-cloth asked Britain to leave India, and Britain did. In South Africa, a prisoner became a president. Do we or do we not believe that peace will defeat war, good evil, generosity greed, selflessness selfishness?

Did Jesus claim to have completed his work? Yes, in that there is in him all that is needed for salvation, his words on the cross, "it is finished," signify the completeness of his work (John 19:30). Faith in him is all that is needed (*sola fides*), and that is God's free gift. Justification is by faith alone: "And that I may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith." (Philippians 3:9)

As Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams, paraphrasing the French philosopher Blaise Pascal, has put it, "Jesus will be in agony until the end of the world," since the kingdom of heaven started with Jesus; but it has not yet been consummated or perfected." Jesus is not dead but alive and continues to work through his church and the Holy Spirit, and that Spirit is not confined to the institutional church but has the freedom of the wind to blow where it wills (John 3:8). Jesus did not teach us all that he could when he was alive, rather the Spirit will guide us—in the future—"into all the truth" (John 16:13). We, the body of Christ, through the Spirit, will turn out to be "the finished" and so continue Christ's mission. It has been said: "It is finished, but it is not over." Thus, we are called to "work out our salvation" (Philippians 2:12).

Nor do I believe that God remained silent after Jesus, which is why I am open to the possibility that He also speaks to us through the Qur'an that Muhammad received, and through Mahatma Gandhi, who was not a Christian—although he acknowledged the influence of the Sermon on the Mount and had a reverence for Jesus. It was, he said, Christians who put him off Christianity! In John 14:12, Jesus said that his followers would do even greater things than he had. Perhaps Rev. Moon is a true follower of Jesus.

Meanwhile, as a Christian committed to carrying out the mandate announced at Jesus' baptism, "to proclaim good news to the poor, release for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind" (Luke 4:18f) I look for friends and allies in the task.

I do not agree with everything that a Muslim believes, or with everything that a Roman Catholic believes, or with everything that a Moonie believes, but I judge them by their fruits. If they break down walls of skin color or creed that separate person from person, then they are with me. If they stand up for oppression against the oppressors, they are with me. If they work for that day when swords will be beaten into ploughshares, then they are with me. If they believe in the equality and dignity and rights of all people, regardless of gender or color or race or creed, then they are with me. If they struggle to

establish the values of the kingdom of God in society and in the world, then they are not against my Lord (Matthew 12:30).

As a Baptist, I am proud of a long history of support for religious liberty, which in my view must be indivisible. Religious liberty cannot be just for me because my doctrines are right, but not for him, because he is in error. It must be religious liberty for all.

I do not know if Rev. Moon is the Messiah, but I do know that he is totally committed to world peace and bringing people together across cultural and racial divides. He is totally committed to reconciling enemies, as Jesus commanded, "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." He has nothing but love for those who have imprisoned him. I do not know if he is perfect or sinless, though I know full well that I am not, yet I sincerely believe that I am God's servant, called to ministry. I have met some of Rev. Moon's family, and they are beautiful people. I have attended conferences at which some of the most accomplished scholars of religion talk about how we can collaborate in dialogue to end injustice and oppression. When no Jew was talking to a World Council of Churches consultation concerned with Jewish-Christian relations, dozens of distinguished Jewish leaders were talking to organizations founded by Rev. Moon.

As a life-long participant in Christian-Muslim dialogue, I have met through Rev. Moon's movement some of the most influential Muslim thinkers in the world. This is because Rev. Moon has funded interreligious dialogue when most church bodies concerned with interreligious relations remain strapped for cash. Who is on the Lord's side? We shall indeed know them by their fruits.

I apologize, if I must, for teaching at the Unification Theological Seminary, and I will defend the orthodoxy of my Christian belief to anyone. Yet I am a Baptist because we do not demand doctrinal conformity, as the Judson Declaration on Baptist Principles (2004) says, "We, therefore, reject all attempts to impose a creed or creed-like structure to be used as a litmus test for orthodoxy."

Therefore, I will allow no man to condemn me because of what I believe. I will be judged by the Lord in whom I believe.

HOLGER A. SANTANA

Judge, National Police Court, Ecuador

TO FIGHT TO ACHIEVE world peace is an effort of great magnitude and a fight on various adverse fronts. For this reason the life and work of Rev. Moon is fascinating; it stimulates us to commit to follow his teachings and animates us to continue on our course of spreading his thoughts and great work.

The messages contained in the lectures by this great and wise man, the king of peace, brought about a change in my life, my family, my surroundings and my work; because after a deep analysis, we have discovered errors and estrangement from our children, brothers, parents, neighbors and an abyss separating us from God and his true love. Today we have stronger values, a deeper love for God and our neighbors, and are dedicating ourselves to serve the world, without seeking benefit for our family, nation or religion.

RECONCILING FAITHS IN EUROPE

ABDUL WAHID PEDERSEN

Imam, General Association of Muslims in Denmark

WE ARE LIVING IN a world today where the necessity of having a cross-religious dialogue becomes ever more evident. A few decades ago, the world did not move as fast as today, and most religions were to some extent nearly permanent within their own domain. A country like Denmark was pretty much mono-religious, and the meeting of religions was merely theoretical.

This changed in Denmark, as it did in so many other countries in the second half of the twentieth century, when migration around the globe intensified dramatically. Cultures and religions started meeting all over the world, causing people not only to look at the state of their own religion, but also recognize that other religions had come into their neighborhoods.

New challenges faced the traditional European populations, especially in the form of the so-called new religions, plus the massive immigration of Islam. Initially, the new religions drew the most attention and bore the brunt of the attacks by the press. No efforts were spared in portraying them as being an evil force within society; their followers were classified as brainwashed and their beliefs were ridiculed.

In the same years, Islam was slowly gaining a foothold in the West. In those days, Islam was considered rather exotic with the faint odor

of *A Thousand and One Nights*. Muslims were invited into Europe to take the jobs on the factory floors that nobody else wanted, and they were loyal and good workers exhibiting only a peripheral affiliation with their own religion initially. When they started settling in, getting married and establishing families, religion became important within these new minority groups in Europe.

And then the tides shifted. The Soviet bloc collapsed, the political landscape of the world changed, and nothing remained what it was. Within a few years, Islam was named the "enemy" of the Western world and a regular race seemed to begin. From even the seat of NATO and the European Union, the idea was voiced that Islam was posing a threat to the old Europe. Muslim minorities in Europe became the target for the negative profiling in the media, and the new religions were left in peace.

For more than a decade, and in some countries closer to fifteen years, there has been a verbal war on Islam in the media, and Muslims in Europe have felt increasingly uncomfortable with the development. My own country, Denmark, has to some extent been in the very forefront of the negative profiling of Islam and Muslims. Fiercely led by extreme right-wing politicians, the debate has become so poisonous that it brought the world to a major crisis in the early part of 2006. A series of drawings, which in themselves were not particularly much worse than what has been seen at several occasions throughout history, set half the world ablaze.

Before the case was over, several people had died.

This was a lesson for the whole world, and particularly for Denmark. It showed with shocking clarity that the Western world had a very important lesson to learn. It had to learn that things have indeed changed for good, and that we have to learn not only to live together but also to at least accept the presence of each other and, preferably, even respect each other.

The cartoon crisis emerged from the unwillingness to accept facts at face value and live in the understanding that the world of today and tomorrow is not the same as the world of yesterday.

In today's and tomorrow's world, society is neither mono-cultural nor mono-religious. We have to realize that wherever we go in the new world, we will meet people of faiths other than our own; and that they have just as much right to have their religion as each one of us feel that we have for ours. This may be a difficult exercise, and it could take time to learn. Nevertheless, it is of crucial importance that we not only recognize it but actually set out to make it happen. At present, the lack of willingness to respect and honor the rights of everybody else's religion is tearing our planet apart nearly faster than we can manage to do it in so many other ways.

Therefore, it has been important for me to share in some of the interreligious events staged by the Unification Church or the Universal Peace Federation. One of the things which has pleased me greatly in this company is the opportunity to speak out openly and clearly. Thus, I have openly stated that I come as a Muslim, I speak as a Muslim and I leave as a Muslim. The only response to this has been "That is exactly what you are expected to do." There have been no attempts to convince me to change my religion.

One of the things that has truly impressed me has been the willingness of Rev. Moon and his movement to include Muslims. In a time when Muslims have been labeled the scum of the earth from left, right and center, it has been refreshing to find that there has been a deliberate outreach of dialogue with Muslims, even immediately after the tragic incident at 9/11. Shortly after that tragedy, I was, along with other Muslim leaders, invited by Mr. Moon to share in a big conference on Islam and world peace in Jakarta. And although it did not change the world, it was one of many important steps taken around the globe in order to alleviate the stigmatizing of all Muslims on the basis of the acts of a very few.

Numerous times, I have been in great gatherings with religious leaders from all over the world, each one speaking openly about his deep concerns for the present world. I have even had the great chance to speak to a congregation of about four hundred people of all different faiths in front of the Western Wall in Jerusalem just beneath the Masjid al Aqsa, which is the third holiest place in Islam.

For many years, I have been active in interreligious work in Denmark as well as internationally; and I have met a lot of sincere and concerned people who willingly and readily embrace each other across religious boundaries. This is a new discipline for a lot of people from the Western world, my self included. We have had to learn every step from scratch. Slowly but surely, we are coming through, and even as forces at the extreme edges are trying to pull everything apart, it also seems that an ever increasing number of people are trying to go that extra mile to meet each other in the no-man's-land between religions—the land where we can all respect each other for having belief and having the courage to express it in a chaotic world. Moreover, these people have the courage to reach out to believers who profess other faiths.

It is tremendously important that we clearly start voicing the opinion that all have the right to profess their beliefs and that we will even fight for each others' rights to believe or not to believe. If I am not ready and willing to stand up for anybody else's rights, then I certainly should not expect anybody else to stand up for me. Thus, as a Muslim in a modern world, I am glad to state that, first of all, I am convinced that (for me) my own religious choice is right and that the way I have taken is right. Otherwise, I would naturally change it immediately. Second, I am glad to state that I am absolutely ready and willing to defend anybody else's right to have their religion, even if I may strongly disagree with their belief.

A WORLDWIDE PEACE FAMILY

DR. A. ABDUL SANTOE

*European Representative, Ahmadiyya Anjuman
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IT ALL STARTED IN Berlin at one of the most authentic Moghul-style mosques. As European representative of the worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, I often visit this Islamic Center and occasionally deliver the Friday sermon. After one of my sermons in the summer of 2005 on peace and tolerance in Islam, Mr. Fritz Piepenburg and Mr. Frank Friederich of the local Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (IIFWP) contacted me and asked me to make a presentation on those subjects to their interfaith group that evening.

In my presentation, I attempted to show that Islam, in its essence and philosophy, has nothing to do with violence or terrorism. This image of about one fifth of the world's population is based only on political and social struggles in today's world. I have—in my opinion—convincingly proven from the holy Qur'an that the religion of Islam is open towards other faiths such as Christianity and Judaism. The wars and terrorism practiced by radical Muslims have no base whatsoever in the holy Book of Islam. Also, contrary to the general opinion, jihad has nothing to do with violence but more with the concept of compassion for fellow human beings. Islam was not founded fourteen centuries ago by a prophet named Muhammad (peace be upon him); instead, it was a continuation

and perfection of existing religions coming from the one and same God of all mankind.

Happy that the presentation seemed to fit seamlessly in an inter-faith group such as IIFWP, I was unexpectedly offered a certificate as an Ambassador for Peace. It would appear later that I was the first person from Holland granted this title. However, being prejudiced against the so-called Moon sect, I accepted this honor with some reluctance.

Although the IIFWP had regularly sent our Ahmadiyya Center in the rather posh Wilmersdorf area in Berlin invitations for conferences, etc., we never had responded positively. There was always a prejudice against everything connected with the Moon sect and the image of sect leaders living in an extravagant style and controlling the lives of their members or subjects.

My experience with Mr. Piepenburg and Mr. Friederich was completely different. In a constructive and very pleasurable way, they laid out a bridge towards our Muslim community in Berlin. Their explanation about the goals and methods of their organization impressed me. Mr. Friederich suggested that I join the Dutch branch of the IIFWP in Amsterdam. For this purpose, he contacted Mr. Wim Koetsier, who is the Secretary General here, and I soon received invitations for meetings in Holland.

Probably in his desire to know me better, Mr. Friederich roamed the Internet for my name and found an article reporting that the honorable title of Knighthood of the Order of House of Orange was extended to me by the Queen's Major of Rotterdam a year or so earlier. Besides my more than forty-six years of government service in Surinam and Holland, special mention was made of my life-long volunteer activities for the community as a whole.

The more I learned about IIFWP, the more I noticed its difference from other sectarian movements. Born in Korea, Dr. Sun Myung Moon not only founded a Christian association but also laid the foundation for dialogue with other religious societies in the world. Out of the IIFWP has evolved the Universal Peace Federation. With this, Father Moon—as he is often referred to by his adherents—has

reached out his hand to all nations in the world so that all may experience peace. It is essential to mention that the association does not impose its own principles on others; all who are involved in the peace process, mostly as appointed Ambassadors for Peace, participate out of their own conviction.

I experienced the influence of the worldwide peace family at an IIFWP conference in Jerusalem in September 2005 and a conference in Geneva not long afterwards. In the stately but colossal conference hall, thousands of Ambassadors for Peace from all over Europe listened as the venerable apostle of peace, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, spoke for more than four hours in a resolute and convincing way about the importance of peace. He also explained that the family is cornerstone for peaceful co-existence in the world. I became more and more impressed by the charisma and persuasive power of this warrior for peace.

My ultimate impression came during the World Summit on Peace held in Seoul, Korea, June 10-14, 2006. Hundreds of Ambassadors for Peace along with political and religious leaders from close to 200 nations assembled to discuss the theme of "Peacebuilding and Human Development." As a Muslim, I was elated to meet religious as well as political Muslim leaders from around the world who were contributing to this great cause. I was particularly happy to meet, among others, the Vice President of the Afghan Republic, His Excellency Karim Khalili.

The pinnacle of this summit for world peace was the opening of the Peace Palace erected high up in the mountains east of Seoul. Embarking on one of the hundreds of buses inching its way up the mountainside, I saw thousands upon thousands of Korean citizens in white clothes walking up the spiraling pathway. Sitting in the air-conditioned coach and watching the white lines of believers moving up the mountain, I immediately thought of biblical scenes such as the New Testament's Sermon on the Mount.

Splendid processions and cultural performances enraptured the audience during the five-hour dedication ceremony. Although I felt lost in the massiveness of the celebrations, I took pride in presenting

one of the crowns of peace to Mother and Father Moon. Lined up with representatives of nearly 200 countries, my contribution seemed small. The Peace Palace in The Hague, The Netherlands, houses the International Court of Justice, which deals with conflicts among nations, but the Peace Palace in Korea is an earthly abode of peace symbolizing ultimate peace among the nations.

My desire to contribute towards world peace arises from my conviction based on the Qur'an that Islam is the most misunderstood religion in the world today. I give presentations on Islam and peace at interfaith conferences using quotes such: "O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other." (49:13) It is thus the difference in race, color and appearance through which we may recognize and know (and respect) one another.

The majority of conflicts and wars in history have taken place among people of the same race: for example, the world wars in Europe, the conflicts between Japan and China, and the drama in South Asia between Hindus and Muslims. Yet other examples of "Cain killing Abel" are the mass genocides in Africa. Can we imagine what would have been the fate of mankind if God Almighty had made all human beings the same race, color or creed? I am convinced that mankind would long ago have become extinct.

Another Quranic invocation which I also make my theme is:

"Surely, those who believe (Muslims) and those who are Jews and the Christians and the Sabians, whoever believes in God and the last day and does good, they have their reward with their Lord and there is no fear for them nor shall they grieve."
(2:62)

Where else can one find recognition of all religions named by their proper names (Muslims, Jews, Christians and Sabians) or not (whoever believes in God) than in the holy Book of Islam? This verse has inspired me to approach other religions and enter interfaith forums to build mutual understanding about peace for mankind.

In addition to the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him) has given examples of pluralism and peaceful coexistence of mankind. Regarding a question from his companions about the rights of one's neighbors, he gave the following answer:

Help him when he asks for help. Lend him something when he asks for it. Console him when he is sad. Congratulate him when something good happens to him. When a disaster overcomes him, sympathize with him.

Do not overshadow his house by building yours higher without his permission. Be always kind to him.

At a time when Jews, Christians, Muslims and others were living together in the city of Medina, this message from the Messenger of Islam must have been a meaningful call for mankind's edification. To answer this call for coexistence, which is now propagated by the Universal Peace Federation, I have decided to dedicate the rest of my life.

GLOBAL PEACEMAKER OF OUR TIME

DR. RAHEEM KHAN

*Vice President, British Muslim Society;
Consultant Cardiac Surgeon (Retired), United Kingdom*

REV. DR. SUN MYUNG Moon is truly a global peacemaker of our time. In today's world, nearly all conflicts arise from some form of religious or ethnic tension. Such conflict situations are seriously aggravated by the wholesale abandonment of that set of "good old moral values" which have stood us in such good stead in the past. These values largely emanated from the Holy Scriptures: guiding principles that originate from the one and only God of all human beings. God's primary concern is for all of us to have a happy and satisfying life here in this world, and to prepare us for an everlasting life thereafter. We, of course, have to go through the Day of Judgment.

In a recent speech, delivered at the Peace Palace in Cheong Pyeong, South Korea, Rev. Moon addressed the subject of God's concern for human beings and the importance of preparing for eternal life. Rev. Moon is a great Christian leader. However, what I found to be most significant about his speech was that I, as a Muslim, could find myself agreeing with everything that he was saying. There were several major points of agreement between his thinking and mine that made a great impression upon me. foremost among these ideas is the assertion that peace in the world is fundamentally dependent

on establishing good understanding and mutual respect among the world's religions.

Rev. Moon's success in bringing representatives of the world's religions together on the same platform is quite exceptional. To reach this point, he has gone through so much physical and mental torture, even being incarcerated for a total of six times by the governments of North Korea, South Korea, Japan and even the United States. Coming to know the history of his life, one can understand his passionate feelings against all wars, the killing of innocents, poverty, deprivation and disease. Furthermore, we can come to see why he has such deep concerns about family values, the institution of marriage and the proper raising of children.

When one comes to understand the heart and passion of this man and his extraordinary success in bringing diverse people together for the sake of humanity, it is incomprehensible that for eleven years a ban was imposed on this peacemaker's entry into the United Kingdom. This unjust ban was finally lifted in 2005. As part of the ultimately successful campaign for justice, I was more than happy to add my name to a letter that through its broad range of signatories quietly and eloquently testified to the support that Rev. Moon enjoys across the full spectrum of faith leaders in Britain.

Government officials know that such support is not easily won; interreligious cooperation is indeed a powerful force for peace and justice in this world, as this action attested. I am heartened to learn that a recent Supreme Court ruling in Germany has opened the way for the overturning of a similar ban that has been operating in the Schengen group of nations—bound by a treaty that was never intended to restrict the free movement of genuine religious leaders and peacemakers. Without the interreligious cooperation that Rev. Moon promotes and facilitates, injustices born of ignorance and prejudice can sadly persist, even in the democracies of which we are rightfully proud.

A very practical way in which this interreligious force for peace and justice is developing is through Rev. Moon's Ambassador for Peace initiative. I would rate it as an outstanding achievement of the

greatest significance. Through this initiative, "peace councils" have already been established in almost every country; Ambassadors for Peace will be responsible for setting up and running these councils at local, regional and national levels.

Their basic function will be to maintain peace by having representatives of different communities meet together regularly and cooperate at all levels. In a wise move that will utilize the wisdom, experience and influence of the world's religious leaders, the setting up of an International Peace Council as an "upper house" to the United Nations will stand at the apex of this worldwide network of peacemakers, and is a proposal that I stand behind 100%

The establishment of this infrastructure for peacekeeping, from the grass-roots to the highest of diplomatic levels, will undoubtedly come to be recognized for the extraordinary achievement that it is. This represents the culmination of decades of work that Rev. Moon has initiated and guided with the goal of world peace in mind.

One of his greatest areas of concern has been the Middle East. Political initiatives alone, that do not tackle the need for interreligious understanding and cooperation, will never succeed—but who else is able to bridge these divides and has the track record in this area that can be respected by all sides? All of us owe something to Rev. Moon. Despite so many noble efforts, still large numbers of innocent men, women and children are losing their lives in this intractable conflict. To deliver peace in the Middle East will surely give him a much-deserved sense of achievement and pride. With this objective in mind we continue to strive for peace in the Middle East, supporting his initiatives by upholding and implementing the following manifesto:

1. All wars are unacceptable.
2. The principle of immediate cease fire must be observed or imposed.
3. International forces deployed should be under UN command.
4. Combatants must sit round the table with the UN and resolve the dispute based on principles of justice, human rights and fair play.
5. The Universal Peace Council should start liaising with the

incoming UN Secretary General (himself, interestingly, from South Korea) and start working for the above principles.

Other areas of the world where Ambassadors for Peace are striving for peace and reconciliation include the divided Korean peninsula (in urgent need of peaceful re-unification), the Balkans (chosen as the focal point of a new European Peace Initiative) and the Kashmir dispute. The Universal Peace Federation and its associated organizations are also active in working for the relief of poverty and the effects of AIDS in Africa.

Rightly, in my opinion, education is at the forefront of the Universal Peace Federation's work. I have participated in many excellent seminars and symposia where the importance of a happy family life is taught and discussed. As Ambassadors for Peace, we are trying hard to restore the real value of the institution of marriage, encouraging sexual abstinence among young people until they can enter into one life-time partnership with the right person. To secure the future, we need to promote the principles of true love and respect for one another that Rev. Moon teaches. He rightly and unashamedly addresses the key issue of sex and sexual morality in a way that is in complete accord with the principles of Islam.

Through working with other Ambassadors for Peace, I have learned to have a greater love for others. There is an extraordinary bond between us and an energy that arises when such a diverse group of people are resolved to live and work for the sake of others. In conclusion, I strongly support a brilliant idea put forward by Sir James R. Mancham, the Founding President of the Republic of Seychelles and Chair of the Global Peace Council of the Universal Peace Federation. He suggested, at the International Peace Conference held in Seoul, South Korea, that we should devote the whole of 2007 to redoubling our efforts to achieve something concrete. I suggest we work towards lasting peace in the Middle East and in the Balkans.

A TRUE BELIEVER IN GOD

DR. RAPHAEL T. KEITA

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Foreign Affairs, Mali*

MY FIRST CONTACT WITH Rev. Sun Myung Moon and his movement was in November 1978 at the International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences held in Boston, Massachusetts. I did not know anything about his ideas, objectives, ideals and activities. As a career diplomat, when I requested the necessary authorization to attend the seminar, some people warned me about "Moonism."

With this warning, for three days, I listened to numerous speeches and debates, all well elaborated and persuasive. I collected many documents and conversed with many people. I took the time to make up my own mind on who Rev. Moon is and what his objectives are. I concluded that Rev. Moon and his movement have three main characteristics to which I thoroughly adhere:

1. They are true believers and express a true faith.
2. They recognize one God, who is beneficent and merciful to all His creatures .
3. They are dedicated to serving God and serving others, including their family, neighbors, nation and the world.

How could one accuse a true and submissive worshipper who accepted all kinds of humiliations and sufferings? I decided that I will always support any person and movement who gives evidence of believing in only one God, trusts His mercy towards mankind, and lives for the sake of others. I must join a people and movement who think as I think and want to do what I want to do.

Rev. Moon is my guide on the straight path of serving God and others. Faith, hope and charity are the most important obligations for any creature towards God and our fellow human beings.

I appreciate the movement's equal treatment extended to the whole human race, regardless of sex, culture or religious practices. It teaches that nobody is good or bad solely because of one of the above characteristics. People are judged and then rewarded or sentenced according to whether they do good or wrong. Such a proclamation is very important to people of all races, and no race should deem itself superior to others.

Rev. Moon teaches people to live for others. It has never been said in his movement that one Ambassador for Peace is worthier or more important than another. What is important is people's standard of purity and their actions for the sake of others. People of all colors are proud to participate in the activities of this movement that can assemble people from all parts of our common world.

The most illustrious example is Rev. Moon himself. He is a Korean by nationality but an internationalist in his heart and mind. He is a brother to people worldwide, and he leads by action. What an exceptional, extraordinary, blessed and divine ideal he is promoting! We, the so-called "colored people," can see beyond words, warm kisses and even charitable gifts and recognize who really loves us and respects us without any political or selfish interest.

I am proud to belong totally and participate fully and permanently in such a movement which recognizes no superiority of human creatures in any field. The only thing that is valued in every time and place is what an Ambassador for Peace says and does for the sake of God and others.

This is what Rev. Moon has taught and practiced with his family, his fellow prisoners, his disciples and fellows in the federation. He helped Africa so much by his words, exemplary life and presents. The evidence that he truly loves Africa and Africans is all his visits and diverse contributions to the development of this continent. How can we not love him too? Moreover, we are sure that what Rev. Moon prefers is to follow him and extend his example to each other, our families, our nations and the whole world itself.

I don't know many movements that are able to assemble hundreds and thousands of people of all categories, ranging from heads of state to humble, unemployed persons, all driven by the same ideals and objectives of loving harmony in the family, neighborhood, nation and world.

In such gatherings among so many diverse people, I have felt happy, strengthened, assured and reassured. I have become more confident in the glory, mercy and goodness of God, because I feel sure that God rejoices to see His children praying, praising and giving thanks to Him for forgiving us and saving us.

The number and the quality of people who welcomed Rev. Moon and his important delegation to Bamako, Mali, on November 8-9, 2005, (and welcomed his special envoys, Rev. and Mrs. Eiji Tokuno, on July 28-29, 2006) indicate a growing participation in the Universal Peace Federation in Mali. The dynamism and constant endeavors of the staff in Mali are appreciated locally and supported strongly by its international secretariat. The people of Mali are proud, dynamic and honest; they will respond to the Universal Peace Federation's efforts.

The Universal Peace Federation offers the ultimate way to unite people of all races and nations, because worshipping the one God and living for the sake of others is the only way we can save ourselves and humanity. We will work to enhance the exceptional contribution of our True Father and illustrious leader, Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon.

DR. HISATOKI KOMAKI

*International Earth Environment University and Komaki
Peace Foundation, Japan*

NO ONE CAN DENY that there is an ultimate cause (cosmic will) of the whole universe and of all dimensions, i.e., "the omniscient, the omnipotent, and the completely righteous and merciful" or the "Creator," as it is called in religious traditions. I believe that all spiritual beings with free will are the objects of the infinite love of the "Creator." In essence, these objects of love, just like the Creator, must have been created as immortal beings and meant to grow ultimately to become happy. That is why I strongly support the "True Family Movement" and the "World Peace Blessing" initiated by Rev. Moon. I fully support Rev. Moon's idea that complete salvation can be attained only through the formation of ethically pure and God-centered families.

PROFESSOR IRVING HEXHAM

*Department of Religious Studies,
University of Calgary, Canada*

MY OWN HOPE IS that when historians of religion look back on the twentieth century they will see the work of the Reverend Moon as a beacon in a dark age, a beacon that acted to stimulate the Church universal and revitalize the Christian tradition by challenging Christians to develop an adequate theology of creation and a vital engagement with culture.

CREATING A CULTURE OF PEACE

HAJI ROSHAN KHAN

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THE WORLD AND THE world's governing body, the United Nations, are in chaos. The United Nations lacks a spiritual dimension to bridge a divided humanity, and to bridge humanity with the Creator (God Almighty). As a result, we read, see and hear of wars, death and human misery. People are at a loss, groping with the questions: Who am I? Why do I exist? Where am I going? How do I get there?

Many seers and prophets came with great messages seeking to solve mankind's myriad problems, but their missions failed, as the dispensations of love brought by these great masters were manipulated by unscrupulous men of position, who created sects to control people and secure their position. As a result, religions are infected with sectarianism, each one gloating about having the only truth, at times unleashing great cruelty on mankind and the environment.

I thank God Almighty that He has sent the modern-day deliverer to mankind, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, as the angel of peace, the seer of peace who has sacrificed his entire life for the unity of mankind in bringing to mankind the message and philosophy of the Abel United Nations, a world in which the Cain and Abel factions unite. With this in mind, he created many institutions of peace, the foremost being the Interreligious and International Federation for

World Peace, and the Universal Peace Federation, with the divine mission of uniting mankind.

He constantly travels around the world as a senior statesman and respected world leader at a ripe age to bring to mankind the message of peace. The secrets of the essence of peace could only be given by a divine person. He has been sponsoring seminars and conferences on several continents at great expense to educate people and to create dialogue among the various religious and political leaders. His grand vision of the Ambassadors for Peace network, the bridging of the Bering Strait, the international peace highway, the Middle East Peace Initiative, and so much more had to have come from a man blessed by God Almighty.

Surah 62 of the Holy Qur'an speaks of the coming of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings of God Almighty be upon Him) to an illiterate people who never had a Messenger. Verse 3 reads: "and others from among them who have not yet joined them, and he is the mighty the wise" ('the mighty and the wise' refers to Allah).

At a time when the true spirit is lost, a man would be raised up after receiving the light from the Holy Prophet. This refers to anyone who studies and is inspired by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, as is our Holy Father, Rev. Moon. This new teacher would spread the light of Islam to the world. It must be understood that Islam means peace, and the prince or king of peace of this age is our Holy Father.

The Holy Father Moon is a Muslim in the sense that He submits to God Almighty, believes in the prophets and the laws, accepts the Prophet Muhammad as the Prophet of God, and works for peace. Hence, in my opinion this verse in this time and age refers to the Holy Father Moon. Some came before, and some will come in the future.

The Ambassadors for Peace in Guyana have been so touched by the love and sacrifice for peace by our Holy Founder and Holy Father that we dedicated our lives to bringing peace to our nation, especially at election time, and to educate our people about peace

and the importance of creating a culture of peace during this age of restoration.

Guyana has been cursed with violence during and after elections. People are often raped, beaten or killed, and properties worth billions of dollars go up in flames. The elections scheduled for August 28, 2006 filled people with great fear and confusion. Many people departed Guyana; many businessmen closed their shops.

Understanding this, the Ambassadors of Peace in Guyana went on a nationwide campaign to educate people that violence will only create more violence and set back the development of our country.

The Universal Peace Federation is linked with the Inter-Religious Organization, whose managing committee is comprised of many Ambassadors for Peace, including this writer. The chairman of the Inter-Religious Organization of Guyana is an Ambassador for Peace, as is the chairman of the nation's Ethnic Relations Commission. These organizations, together with the UN Social Cohesion Program and the UN Multi-Stakeholders Forum, created several programs to bring peace to a nation about to self-destruct. I must say at this juncture that the current leader of the opposition party, which many blame for violence, is also an Ambassador for Peace. Ambassadors for Peace were actively involved in many campaigns for peace during 2006.

In January, hundreds of Guyanese of all walks of life joined a Peace Walk through the capital city of Georgetown from the Botanical Gardens to St. George's Cathedral (1.5 miles). Participants included the ambassador of the United States and high commissioners of the United Kingdom and Canada. Many ministers of government, Christian ministers, imams and pandits joined in. His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo joined half way through the walk and delivered a talk at the concluding ceremony. All television, radio stations and newspapers covered this event. The Peace Walk inspired some young people in the county of Corentyne, Berbice, to launch a Peace Campaign with motorcycles to sensitize the people on the importance of peace. Then it was taken to Georgetown, Linden and other parts of the country.

In May, Ambassadors for Peace, working closely with the above groups organized the signing of the Peace Pact by political parties. Many heads of diplomatic missions, United Nations organizations, and religious and social organizations came out in solidarity. Peace buttons were prepared, and distribution began on May 2, the day the Peace Pact was signed. Two months later, the Citizens' Peace Pledge was launched at the General Post Office on July 24. Thousands of men, women and children came out to collect and wear their buttons.

Television discussions about interreligious harmony entitled "Breaking the Silence" took place on the Electric Mosque's Teaching of Islam, owned and chaired by this writer, and by the National Communications Network. Several other television stations held similar discussions.

The work of the Universal Peace Federation, through its Ambassadors for Peace in Guyana, continues nationwide, spreading respect and love for all. Ambassadors for Peace have contributed tremendously to the current peace that prevails in Guyana. There was no violence during the elections or afterwards, and Guyana is on the threshold of great human and industrial development. In Guyana, Ambassadors for Peace are fulfilling their mandate.

DR. HOOSEN AUCHBARAULEE

*Brampton Multifaith Council; Founder, World Islamic
Mission, Noor-Islam Society, Canada*

TO SUCH A MAN of God, what can we give? Surely, the ultimate gift we can bring is our true love and support. We don't have what we should give to you, but you have our unceasing efforts, our hearts and our love.

PROMOTING HARMONY

QAMRUL A. KHANSON

Author, "The Dreamer," Canada

SUN MYUNG MOON'S GOAL is to educate people of many faiths to be people of goodness who follow God's will. He wants to raise up young people with education in heart as well as knowledge. He wants them to love God, love humanity and love their nation so that they can be the owners of a new history. God's ultimate providence cannot be limited to certain people, cultures or areas, and especially not within religious or denominational boundaries. To overcome those boundaries we need young people who are progressive, open-minded and future-oriented.

The twenty-first century is the time for religion to exert genuine leadership in the world. Let us remove the concept that religion divides. Sun Myung Moon teaches people to come through commonalities in religions. There are more unifying elements in religion than divisive elements. Sun Myung Moon plans to win peace in the world by winning the hearts and minds of all people through the basic principles of all religions by means of ongoing dialogue, understanding and appreciation. Others will join in, adding moral and intellectual strength to our cause of peace with God and among humans beings.

The moral vision and lifestyle of religious leaders can be a hurricane lantern for humankind, not only pointing the way to the world beyond this one but also teaching the path to genuine happiness and peace on this earth.

Throughout the ages, people of thirty-five to forty-five years of age have often been called by God to provide leadership at crucial points in history. Who among the Jews, Christians and Muslims would forget that it was Moses at age forty who came to the defense of a fellow Israelite and killed an Egyptian taskmaster? It has been said that Moses spent forty years in Egypt learning to be somebody and forty years in Midian learning to be nobody; this prepared him for the mighty task of delivering the children of Israel.

It is no coincidence that when he was forty years of age Muhammad received the call from the God of Adam. One night, while lying absorbed in his thoughts in the solitude of a cave, Muhammad was commanded by a mighty voice to go forth and preach. Muhammad rose trembling and hastened home to seek rest and solace in his wife Qhadijah's tender care, and she calmed and comforted him.

She later consulted her relative, Waraqah Ibn Nawfal, who was a Christian. He declared that the heavenly message that had been revealed to Moses had come to Muhammad, and that he was chosen to be a Prophet of God.

Sun Myung Moon is the patriarch of peace, following the path of Biblical Islamic figures. He has preached peace to the billions of humans around the globe. His vision of peace attracts people who want to overwhelm the dark forces surrounding the material world.

The crises of our global society stem from our neglect of God. Since the ideological confrontation between the left wing and the right wing is now over, the future of humanity needs a new world-view centered on God. We should dedicate our efforts to Sun Myung Moon, who has allocated his resources to educational programs designed to inspire young people to love God, love their families and countries, and live by the highest moral standards.

Religious leaders should not only inherit and pass on the precious and holy wisdom of their great traditions but also devote their lives to unselfish service. Wisdom is certainly personified in and identified very closely with God. Of course peace cannot come until one strives for it. In the Islamic tradition, wisdom is considered the lost

treasure of believers; if they can retrieve wisdom, the kingdom of this world and Heaven becomes their realm.

Sun Myung Moon as a true disciple of Jesus Christ is devoting himself to what Jesus did in his lifetime. Muslims around the globe have a commonality of interest in Sun Myung when he talks of peace through the words of Jesus Christ. In the Islamic tradition, Jesus Christ, as a messenger to the Children of Israel, said:

I (Jesus Christ) come to you with a sign from your Lord—I create for you from clay the shape of a bird, then I blow into it, and it becomes a live bird by God's leave. I restore vision to the blind, heal the leprous, and I revive the dead by God's leave. I can tell you what you eat, and what you store in your homes. This should be a proof for you, if you are believers. I confirm previous scripture—the Torah—and I revoke certain prohibitions imposed upon you. I come to you with sufficient proof from your Lord. Therefore, you shall observe God, and obey me. God is my Lord and your Lord; you shall worship Him alone. This is the right path. (Qur'an, 3:46–51)

With such affirmations from their holy book, Muslims are motivated to unite with Sun Myung Moon's message of universal peace. Peace can be achieved only by recognizing that the God of Adam is One God. Leaders of peace movements have made history, but it is rare to see one who upholds God as a source of peace in this world.

With the advancement of age, Sun Myung Moon is still going strong, but his message will not die with him. Millions of Christians, Muslims and people of other faiths will rise up to take the torch to remove the darkness from the world.

The Almighty God has given everyone a time limit in this world, but those who convey the message of peace and truth from God do not die unknown and untold.

The Qur'an bears witness to Jesus Christ and those who follow him. Thus, the Almighty God of Adam, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad said:

Oh Jesus, I am terminating your life, raising you to Me, and ridding you of the disbelievers (who ignored your message of peace with God). I will exalt those who follow you (Followers of Peace Movements) above those who disbelieve (War mongers against peace), till the Day of Resurrection. Then to Me is the ultimate destiny of all you, then I will judge among you regarding your disputes. (Qur'an, 3:55)

When the Universal Peace Federation (UPF) was founded by Dr. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon as a global alliance of religious communities to promote peace, I had no doubt that it will bring a unified world in which all people will live together in harmony, cooperation and co-prosperity for the pleasure of Almighty God and for the pleasure of people who love God.

The Almighty God seeks a community of humans who would strive for peace in the world, promote moral values and propagate human life through marital bonds created in the example of Adam and Eve. Thus, the Almighty God of Adam, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad said:

Let there be a community of you who invite to what is good (peace), advocate righteousness (Moral Values, etc.), and forbid evil (Homosexuality, etc.). These are the winners (Who will be the winners in this world and the hereafter). (Qur'an, 3:104)

The Qur'an speaks highly of people like Sun Myung Moon who believe in Almighty God and respect what has been revealed to Moses and Muhammad. Such people devoted themselves to the cause of the Almighty God to please Him and please those who revere Him. Surely, there is recompense for such people not only in this world but in the hereafter, provided the monotheism of God is upheld in the pursuit of peace.

Surely, some followers of the previous scriptures (Torah & Gospel) do believe in God, and in what was revealed to you (Oh Muhammad), and in what was revealed to them

(Abraham, Moses, & Jesus). They reverence God, and they never trade away God's revelations for a cheap price. These will receive their recompense from their Lord. God is the most efficient in reckoning. (Qur'an, 3:199)

I, as a Muslim member of UPF, am confident that the UPF will make a decisive contribution to the realization of world peace, and I pray that God will bless all of us, our families and our work. As Rev. Moon said:

It is now the time for religion to exert genuine leadership in the world. I believe that religious people should feel responsible for the situation of humankind, and for resolving the various inequities of this age.

In conclusion, it is time to urgently pray to Almighty God to grant peaceful sovereignty on this earth.

Our God; possessor of all sovereignty. You grant sovereignty to whomever You choose, You remove sovereignty from whomever You choose. You grant dignity to whomever You choose, and commit to humiliation whomever You choose. In Your hand are all provisions. You are Omnipotent. (Qur'an, 3: 26)

LIVING FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

DR. SAIFULLO SAFAROV

*Director, Center for Protecting Peace in Asia,
Dushanbe, Tajikistan*

I WISH TO OFFER PRAISE and glory to our Lord for enabling me to become acquainted with someone who is doing so much to open the way to realize peace on this earth. I came to realize how many people before me have been fostering world peace not only in words but in deeds. They have a burning desire to make a great leap forward for the sake of the happiness of others as well as themselves. Those treading this path represent not just one religion but all the faiths of this world. They are learned people, both secular and religious, and include heads of state, prime ministers and presidents.

I came to know this movement and fell in love with the people. Now I am laboring together with them for the sake of world peace. This is what my encounter with Rev. Sun Myung Moon has given to me. Could anyone possibly put it better than by stating, "The ultimate goal of God in creating human beings was to experience joy in His interaction with ideal families where true love abounds"? Or, in another passage, "God granted us equal status with Himself, the right to participate in His labors on an equal basis, to live together with Him, and to inherit everything from Him. God bequeathed all of His own attributes to humanity." (From Dr. Sun Myung Moon's

speech on September 12, 2005 in New York) Hearing such words, we feel responsible for extending these divine gifts to humankind.

All of us ought to believe in God and enjoy a tranquil, benign and peaceful life on this planet. It is not by chance that the following passages are in the Qur'an: "Knowledge opens the doors to Paradise," and "A man in quest of knowledge abides upon the throne of the Lord until he returns home." Like-minded thinkers seek the path of peace, unity, stability and prosperity. Fearing no obstacles, we walk this path without faltering or deviating from it.

Dr. Moon first undertook this path, and he showed us that no power under the sun and no difficulty whatsoever can block the way of whoever walks the right path. I first learned of Dr. Moon from his foes; I had read only negative things about him, yet I overcame those fears and joined the movement. In truth I was already upon the path of defending peace, having begun to organize a movement to restore peace in Afghanistan back in 1997. I was also organizing a movement for the reunification of Korea through the International Center for the Defense of Peace in Asia located in Dushanbe in my country.

In the Holy Bible, King Solomon, a sage and orator, declares that all rivers flow to the sea, yet the ocean never fills up, and the rivers return to their sources, ever again to flow to the sea. (Ecclesiastes 1:7) We ought to strive toward the sea and accomplish great goals. Dr. Moon fashioned an ocean and placed grandiose goals before us, exhorting all people to strive for them. People of all religions and all nationalities as well as men and women both young and old are heading toward this goal, and they differ markedly from those who have no goals in life and are merely striving to survive.

The President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rakhmonov, wrote about the origins of the Silk Road in his book *The Tajik People in the Mirror of History*:

The daughter of the Chinese leader went to marry a prince of the Scythian tribes, who lived at that in the frontier territory of Khutilon and Sogd (present-day Tajikistan). Within the folds of her skirts she secretly concealed silkworms and the

seeds of the mulberry tree. From their side, the Chinese people bred the distinguished horses of Bactria (modern Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan), and learned how to cultivate their evergreen feed, alfalfa.

In such a manner, the peoples of Central Asia came to know the taste of mulberries and the soft texture of silk, while the Chinese gained fine horses and quality feed for their livestock. Through the Silk Road we became acquainted with one another.

Then why, in this twenty-first century, must we live in conflict and war rather than in peace and prosperity? Why should we not have a Silk Road in our time, a road which would bring people by the millions to our doorstep? Why should we regard other religions and religious movements as enemies? Why should we not see other nations as our friends and helpers? We must by all means work together to resolve these questions in a positive way.

Many thinkers have stated that hardships cultivate within an individual the qualities necessary for overcoming those same difficulties. Thus, we too must struggle to overcome our own difficulties. In fact, these challenges are the same for the entire population of our globe today. They are poverty, the lack of potable drinking water, epidemics, incurable diseases, the lack of good roads in some regions, infant mortality, cancer and cardiovascular diseases, and disastrous calamities such as tsunamis, floods and earthquakes.

Our president launched the UN project for the Decade of Water for Life which gave to tens of millions of people the chance to escape death from unsanitary water supplies and inspired governments to consider the ecological problems that affect the health of all the people of our planet. The United Nations adopted this idea, and a resolution was passed by acclamation. In such a manner, we ought to search for ideas and goals oriented to the service of humanity.

There are also many remaining challenges which people have ushered in, such as international terrorism, illegal drug trafficking, separatism, extremism, slave trade, dealing in weaponry, the whole

complex of environmental problems, AIDS, a whole range of epidemic diseases, moral breakdown and the crisis of the family.

I am deeply inspired by the activities and by the spirituality of this great man, and I believe that if each one of us will think, work and live for the sake of others, we will at the same time be living for our own sake and for the sake of our next of kin, our friends, relatives, our children and grandchildren. Such a philosophy will help bring about stability and prosperity of all the countries and peoples of our world today.

The Bering Strait project is truly the greatest project being undertaken to link the international rail and highway systems and unify our world as one living zone. Will this not be a chief contribution to clearing away the barriers between nations, peoples, races and cultures—barriers which for thousands of years have hindered the path of development of mankind as a whole? Is it time to wholeheartedly support this idea which inspires us to move toward unification and development? May God bless all people who work to eliminate poverty, conflict and sorrow; and lead all people toward love, unity, and prosperity.

The Sogd peoples tell the following story:

Once a donkey complained to a camel, "Why do I keep falling down on the trail, whereas you do not?" The camel replied, "Mainly it is because I am taller and keener of eyesight than you, and I can see much farther. For I look upon the world from a higher vantage than you, and because, for example, from the very outset, I can see from the beginning to the end of a pitfall. In such a way, the grace of God has revealed to me everything along my path, and so I always know how and where to plant each footstep. You, in contrast, are only able to see what is right in front of your eyes, like a bird who only sees the bird seed two paces ahead of him, without noticing the snares surrounding it."

It behooves us to acknowledge those who see farther and more clearly, think more deeply, do more, and give more than ourselves. We ought to stand shoulder to shoulder with experienced and wise leaders and jointly offer our services to humanity.

GOD IS IN EACH OF US

TATIANA LEE

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ONE COLD DECEMBER DAY in Moscow in 2005 became the happiest day of my life: I received the title of Ambassador for Peace! This award came at our Peace Embassy where, on that day, people who care about the fate of our planet had gathered. These were politicians and businessmen, public figures and scholars. The founder of the Unification movement, Dr. Moon, had inspired us and united us all together.

I had first heard of this man ten years earlier. My husband and I had been invited to take part in a conference which took place in the outskirts of Ekaterinburg. We became acquainted with the life and activities of Dr. Moon; we learned many things about the principles of the construction of the universe, standards of moral values, the purpose of life, and the value of the human being through the philosophical teaching of the Divine Principle. I was amazed at Rev. Moon's strength of will, sense of purpose, and perseverance toward achieving these goals.

The main goal of this extraordinary person is living for the benefit of others. For him, anything "personal" is of secondary importance; his first priority is to support and help people, families and children of all different nationalities. To uplift the family and place it on a pedestal, to exalt the wife and the mother, to protect the global community from war, terrorism, and any other sorts of conflicts, to give rebirth

to the divine in each person—these are among the main tasks of Dr. Moon. The family is the basis of life, it is the foundation for a happy childhood, and the gateway of maturity for each person.

This conference stimulated me to create the Children's International Charitable Center, which has now been in existence for five years. I see talent in each and every child, and I strive to develop this gift, and to assist the child in finding his own path toward a wonderful future.

The family of Dr. Moon can serve as a model for true relationships among parents, children, and grandchildren. Likewise, the most important things in my life are family and friends, whom I value for their kindness and responsiveness and for their willingness to be of assistance at any moment of difficulty. Somehow or other, I happened to see a television broadcast from Korea, where several hundred young couples were simultaneously joined in marriage in a stadium. This was truly an awe-inspiring sight! I felt such joy that these young people had decided to seal their bonds of wedlock in such a manner, by participating in the Holy Blessing ceremony. And may God grant them bliss!

The organizer of such a significant occasion was the Family Federation for World Peace, under the auspices of Dr. Moon. Upon this earth there should not be a single person who is lonely or forsaken. Creating a family, raising children and serving our Fatherland in the name of peace—are these simple tasks? So, the model for such a family is the family of Dr. Moon himself: his wonderful wife and their children, for whom the heartistic, tender relationships of mother and father, their mutual respect for one another, and the great love serve as the guideline for their own future families and relationships of mutual respect between spouses. Indeed, the example of Dr. Moon's family can serve as an example for many people, especially in this day and age, when it is no simple matter at all to make a family and to preserve its sanctity in our home.

Another idea that resonates with me is that of international exchange marriages. It is really hard to see any good reason why people cannot love, understand and support one another in work

and in leisure, in sorrow and in joy. Now it is twice harder, if these reasons for not joining together are those of skin color, shape of the nose, cooking recipes, or other customs. By accepting in marriage someone from another nationality, together with all his/her kinfolk—this already makes it impossible to harbor enmity toward that nation as a whole. And the children of international marriages even further strengthen these bonds of friendship and unity.

It is hard to even keep on living when we witness how much grief and agony families are made to suffer on account of alcohol and drugs, crime and terrorism on our planet. The structure and atmosphere of Dr. Moon's family serve as a tuning fork that gives the key note for goodness and joy, happiness and service in the name of world peace. To preserve the warmth and comfort of the family hearth, to rear children to be good, and to lend a hand in raising one's grandchildren is a costly and precious thing!

I wanted so much to enter into the inner realm of this family, to absorb this warmth, and to find out how to warm up all people, to help support them in their lifetime. May love and joy reign forever in this family. I wish health and long life to Dr. Moon!

*May fortune accompany you wherever you go,
May the smiles of friends warm your heart,
Success and happiness in every moment
Shall be in each of the days of your life!*

BRIDGING RIVERS THAT DIVIDE US

MICHEL KAMANO

Chair, Ambassadors for Peace of Guinea

MY PARTICIPATION IN THE Universal Peace Federation rests on my conviction in the rightness of the message that religious unity and harmony are absolutely necessary if we are to build a world of peace. This message is based on the simple declaration that people must love each other, embracing and respecting the differences of race, ethnicity and above all, religious conviction. The ills of modern society come—in large part—because we, being blinded by our material and scientific progress, forget to turn our eyes to God.

It was in this spirit that Rev. and Mrs. Moon began their world peace tours. In all the countries they visited, they emphasized the need for a partnership between governments, religious leaders and civil society as a whole. In particular, they spoke of the need for innovation at the United Nations, such that the voice of religious leaders could be heard on the world level.

The Ambassadors for Peace in Guinea are taking this call very seriously. We are especially concerned about the education of our youth, the leaders of tomorrow. We need to teach them how to create strong loving families that are the best protection against the evils of AIDS, poverty, ignorance and violence, and are the foundation

of a culture of peace. Our peace motto is expressed in the following poem written by an Ambassador for Peace:

To Have Peace

*To have peace,
Let us love one another
As God loves us
Let us forgive each other.
For none is perfect.*

*To have peace
Let us live for others
That is the hope
Of all Ambassadors for Peace*

*To have peace
Let us hear each other
Without agendas
Building strong bridges of trust
Over rivers of suspicion*

GOD'S LOVE IS GREATER THAN LAW

HAFIZ FARID

*Fellow inmate with Rev. Moon at
Danbury Federal Prison, USA*

I WAS ONE OF THE few people at Danbury who believed in God. I was the leader of the Muslim organization in the prison. I was called an imam. There were about ten or twelve inmates in our organization; sometimes even as many as twenty. Our religion has had similar propaganda to Rev. Sun Myung Moon's movement, and has been vilified by the press, so I could understand his circumstances very, very well.

I had seen how religious people, people such as Martin Luther King, Jr., were sent to prison. So I was looking at Rev. Moon from a different point of view from most people. I now had a chance to meet Rev. Moon face to face [when he arrived in Danbury prison in 1984 to serve an eighteen-month sentence on income-tax charges]. I knew that it was a magnificent opportunity—a great opportunity. I recognized that my being in Danbury was a blessing from God. My reason for being in prison started to unfold.

I saw Rev. Moon sitting there and I took the opportunity to go over to see him. No one was talking to him at the time. I heard that the night before a couple of people had come down to speak with him, mostly out of curiosity. But I think I was the first person to actually come over and sit down and talk with him. I asked Mr. Takeru

Kamiyama [Rev. Moon's assistant, sentenced to prison together with him] what his name was. I said my name was Hafiz Farid, and that I was glad to meet him. Mr. Kamiyama is a very warm, personable individual. Not that Rev. Moon is not also that way, but Rev. Moon, like all religious people, has a certain firmness and strength.

One has to be very strong to be a true servant of God. One has to make sure in this world that one has high moral excellence, uncompromising standards, and no weakness. But on the other hand, he has a loving aspect, a compassionate aspect. I'm sure his pictures convey this. He is a very loving man, and a warm man, but he is also very stern, firm, and strong.

So Mr. Kamiyama and I started talking. I said I didn't know whether Rev. Moon spoke English at that time or how well. I had heard that Mr. Kamiyama was designated as his interpreter. I said I'd like to ask Rev. Moon a question. And then he kind of turned to Rev. Moon, and Rev. Moon said, "Not now." He referred to the fact that the guards were watching very closely so that he didn't preach to the inmates. But I said I just wanted to know what the basic tenets of Rev. Moon's church were.

Having been told not to preach, Rev. Moon and Mr. Kamiyama didn't want to start talking. It was their first day in prison and they were trying to comply. But I said, "Well, we're just talking."

Then I explained to him that I was the leader of a Muslim organization, and there was the immediate recognition. You know, religious people have a sort of affinity toward each other, a common bond that you just don't see among atheists. My saying that kind of struck a warm chord, so I sat down.

Rev. Moon answered my question very briefly. He said, "Unification. Oneness. All religions should come together to fight Satan." Then he asked me a question. He said, "Do you think God likes to see Muslims killing Christians, Christians killing Muslims, Jews killing Christians, or Jews killing Muslims? God does not like that."

I could find no reason not to accept that truth. It was basic to my own teachings and I think true of all religious teachings. In Islam, we believe there is one God, the father of all humanity. And the prophets

are a line of messengers sent to preach to the people. The ultimate aim of all people is to return to God. So the historical and scriptural teachings of Islam are compatible with Unification thinking. So because of what I believe in, I was immediately impressed by what Rev. Moon said. I didn't see any way-out, cultish type of ideology in anything he had said thus far. I automatically could understand, because we were speaking from a universal plan of consciousness.

We continued to talk, and Rev. Moon said that he had recently sponsored a world tour for young people to visit all the religious centers of the world. I was amazed. In our religion, in Islam, for a man to sponsor a trip to send people on a religious pilgrimage around the world would be one of the greatest acts of charity that could be done. To go yourself would be a great act of obedience, but to send other people at your expense would be an act of devotion that would please God immensely. I just thought about the greatness of a man who would do that. I started to see the greatness of Rev. Moon and his relationship with God.

Every morning, Rev. Moon could be seen with Mr. Kamiyama sitting outside at about 5 o'clock, meditating and reading. I would be up going to work and I would see them. I wouldn't interrupt them at that time. We Muslims have prayer in the very early morning hours also.

Someone asked me once, one of his followers, "Is it true that Rev. Moon prays all the time and gets only two or three hours of sleep?" And so I said, "Well, I never watched Rev. Moon twenty-four hours a day. But I can tell you this: his entire lifestyle, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, from what I and other people have seen, is an act of submission to God."

Prayer is a ritual, and different religions have different rituals. But the real meaning of prayer is when you actually get up from the prayer—how it reflects in your life, your will and your thoughts. In our attitude, we have to be bowing every day.

So his life is prayer. I've never seen him angry; I've never seen him complain. I never saw him speak harshly to another individual. I

never saw him reject any individual's question, or refuse to answer him.

Rev. Moon was always reading. One thing that really impressed me about him was that he was a man of great knowledge and great wisdom. I knew that he had to have a lot of knowledge, to be able to speak about the subjects of God, theology and religion while withstanding the attack of scholars and scientists. And yet with all his wisdom, he was continually studying. And this made me understand that he is still open to new knowledge. He has not reached that point that some men reach where they think they know it all.

I'll never forget the day I left Danbury. I wanted to say goodbye to him. When I told him I was leaving that day he just smiled from ear to ear, with genuine happiness. Usually when someone is getting ready to leave you can feel the negative vibrations, the anger and jealousy among the other inmates. But I really felt Rev. Moon's warmth. He reached out and embraced me and he said, "We will connect on the outside." And then he said, "Farid, we have had many, many talks about doctrine and scripture."

He had given me some of his books while he was there and I had had my friends search and search through New York for a Qur'an to give to him. First we found a Chinese Qur'an, and then we finally found him a Korean Qur'an.

He said, "Always remember one thing, Farid. God's love is greater than God's law." That very profound statement really kind of summed up all the conversations we had had. No matter what dogma you follow, no matter what particular faith you have, if you don't have love—God's love for humanity, for people and for creation—then the law doesn't mean very much. God's love is greater than God's law.

A MODERN-DAY SAINT

DR. JUERGEN REDHARDT

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IN WESTERN SOCIETY, WHERE people often experience an overwhelming feeling of senselessness, there is a desperate, yet pious search for a completely different way of life. Many have found in new religious leaders a purpose and focus for their lives. Contrary to what some would have us believe, these leaders are not restricted to one particular race or characteristic: Rev. Moon, for example, is an Asian from the once-obscure land of Korea.

In the Unification movement, Rev. Moon is regarded as the returned Messiah and hopes to be recognized as such by the 1.8 billion Christians worldwide. Rev. Moon's program is accordingly bold: unification of world religions; sponsorship of international conferences, attended by top scientists from all fields; controversial speaking tours; rallies and banquets. To produce worldwide impact, he places the focus of his work in the United States. We are able to observe through this wide range of activities Rev. Moon's sense of confidence, his communicative ability and his remarkable organizational and intellectual capacity.

We are left with the unmistakable impression that we are dealing with something quite other than a pretext for a religious world cartel or a mere figurehead. We are dealing with a very distinctive, assertive personality (with a pronounced athletic disposition), astonishingly vigorous and of consistent mental intensity. From objective

biographical data we are left in no doubt that Rev. Moon also has a tremendous amount of spiritual experience.

It would be misleading to classify Sun Myung Moon's personality according to the psychological model of introvert and extravert. Besides his clearly expressive nature, one can definitely observe that he avoids all types of unnecessary gestures, such as stretching the body or sweeping arm and hand movements. With his sparse facial expressions and gestures, Rev. Moon always conveys, instead, the impression of a collected personality, of stabilized inner security and motility. And that which he formulates in his speeches in no way lacks clarity of emotional coloring or succinctness.

Those who mistrust psychological analyses will probably gain the same picture of Sun Myung Moon's personality through an "information-getting" interview. Such an interview was conducted in a penetrating and thorough way by the American philosophy professor Frederick Sontag in 1977.

Sun Myung Moon identifies himself completely with his mission. And that mission is much more than that of a theological or religious instructor! His Jesus vision on Easter morning, 1935 was a typical religious peak experience and one which could not be more accurately reported even by a psychologist of religion. From that moment on, he has seen his life mission tenaciously and unswervingly as the completion of what he sees as the uncompleted salvation work of Jesus.

The plan of salvation upon which this is based culminates in Rev. Moon's marriage, which has an eschatological meaning in the sense of Revelation 19:7 (the "marriage of the Lamb"). The Divine Principle, the basic document of faith of the Unification Church, sees the family as the core of the perfected world desired by God. Sun Myung Moon and Hak Ja Han Moon see themselves as the founders of the "True Family" of mankind. This is certainly an astonishing ideological break in the increasingly pathological development of our Western society, a society which considers the consumption of pornographic films to be as much an expression of freedom as motorcycling and football.

The self-proclamation of Rev. Moon is, of course, considered by outsiders to be extraordinarily arrogant and offensive. This is, by the way, a well-known enough and oft-repeated process in church history. However, the seemingly scandalous certainty of his mission, which members of the ecumenical movement find utterly impossible to tolerate (despite their agreement on the provisional nature of the church in history) must be understood in the context of a cosmopolitan mission program. This is because we are dealing here with the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth—which has often been rehearsed in church history—and, at the same time, the restoration of fallen creation.

Sun Myung Moon does not consider himself to be a cult figure but an eschatological figure. As the "Third Adam," he has revealed the secret of Satan and has recognized the true meaning of the Fall. In this way, he has become the first person to sever evil at its roots and is able to bring about the inevitable transition to goodness which takes place at Christ's return.

Through a psychological analysis of this enormous sense of mission and his unguarded statements, Rev. Moon is defenselessly exposed to public suspicion as someone who belongs to the vast throng of those who are religiously misguided and megalomaniacs. Yet one must exercise here extreme caution and restraint, because psychological instruments are not particularly helpful for distinguishing true prophets from false prophets. This article in any case excludes the possibility of seeing Sun Myung Moon as a mere passing phenomenon or a bluffer.

Especially, young people are attracted to the Unification Church for a variety of reasons. These include: the teaching, the familial models, the lifestyle of the members with their infectious example of selfless investment and sacrificial faith, the preaching of messianic hope, the reconciliation of science, culture and religion in an ecumenical unity of all the faithful. However, the fascination with the Unification Church lies not only in these things. The evangelical effectiveness of this religious movement is rooted in the convincing

way in which Sun Myung Moon presents God as the ultimate base of our existence.

In the individual and family spheres, Sun Myung Moon appears at first sight to be rather conventional. The impression one receives is of a broad-minded personality dealing with everyday realities and duties with a strong sense of responsibility and reliability. He never avoids any task, including the most menial. No occupation is below his dignity and he encounters all people with warmth and sympathy. Just that he is seen by Unificationists as possessing the aura of the secret of messianic election. If you want to track down Sun Myung Moon's charismatic abilities, the sober truth remains that one is dealing with a more or less explainable personal center of attraction, which is, of course, countered with equal vehemence and intransigence. How is it able to continuously captivate young (and elder) people?

According to the religious educationalist G. Lange in his analysis of the latest Catholic Synod resolution on religious education, "the saints are the answer to the question: What do you Christians consider to be a successful and victorious life?" And he lists a wide variety of qualifications and methods of description:

Canonized and unambiguous saints, as well as ones appearing in an unfavorable light, ...both juxtaposed to fellow humans who have simply surpassed themselves in a precarious situation...; commitment to society juxtaposed to commitment to God;... good people juxtaposed to those who are exemplary in their fight for goodness, without necessarily being good themselves.

In my opinion, Sun Myung Moon can without doubt be included in this extensive catalogue of characteristics of saints. Under the precondition that every saint without exception is only able to objectify and demonstrate a single perspective on the truth of the gospel, one may well state: Sun Myung Moon belongs to the lineage of those who, in terms of biography and life content, in a particularly vivid and unforgettable way represent that which all Christians demand:

to take responsibility for the initiating nature of God's love. He establishes here markers and directional constants, which one ought to take seriously.

Sun Myung Moon is in full accordance with the most essential and unmistakable characteristic of saintliness: to bring strongly into focus again a socially predominant, diffuse, but currently dying relationship to God.

Self-appointed Devil's advocates will bring to bear against this undesirable canonization process the aggressive anticommunism of Rev. Moon. Certainly, whoever has become accustomed to despise primitive anticommunism (which in this country has combined with an obsequious pro-Americanism, political unimaginativeness and dangerous suppression of reality, producing an explosive mixture) can hardly understand a religious Korean who has suffered the brutish socialistic re-orientation of his homeland—and all the evils that are connected with it—under incomparably difficult circumstances.

It is, therefore, natural that Sun Myung Moon is not devoted to the unrestrained capitalism which has turned the first world into a pile of goods, military bases, private land and rubbish tips and left third world countries dilapidated and impoverished should they not show their reverence toward the "American way of life." Moreover, if one should accuse Rev. Moon of profit-addicted business and trade practices, then one should come straight to the point and explain why and when such profit-making is or was unethical and whether it truly violated the idealistic goals of the Unification Church.

The paradox in relation to Sun Myung Moon, which has to be productively solved especially in terms of religious psychology and religious sociology, consists of the following: One does not need to become entangled with the phenomenon of this modern saint and his charisma to nevertheless recognize in him a positive and creative opposing camp set against the worldwide triumphal procession of banality and cynicism. Ideologists of all nations, who deliberately preach to "the only true church" of the center and for whom every religion is either condemned to extinction or merely has to

stand boldly for the self-justification of the so-called free world, will always furiously march into battle against productive religious fringe positions, not least against a "Jerusalem of the East" of Sun Myung Moon.

The saint always tries to surmount the limitations of his own denomination. He feels directly responsible for the well-being of all others and is there for them. The special saintliness of Sun Myung Moon is that he does not belong exclusively to the Christian realm, but also to the shamanistic, Buddhist and Confucianist as well. Yet he found his deepest roots in Korean Christianity.

If one is to take seriously the role of Pyongyang as the Jerusalem of the East, which Sun Myung Moon has always done, we should hope that against the background of this eschatological light—a coming together of all religions will take place. However, he will have to develop a much greater ecumenism than our forefathers attained at the end of the last century. A more tolerant, accepting and deeply founded "advanced ecumenism" is called for.

The pointers and principles for such a brotherly and continuous discussion among all religions have been laid down. It would seem that Sun Myung Moon possesses the appropriate philosophical instrument to enable him to realize his life's highest goal.