

Blessed children's workshop 'Forgive, Love and Unite' in Jerusalem, Israel

Hod Ben-Zvi
April 28, 2016



From April 25 to April 28, we held a blessed children's workshop at the CARP center in Jerusalem, Israel. The participants ranged in age from eight to fourteen. Seven children fully participated in the workshop from beginning to end. Its purpose was to help these blessed children discover their identity, learn the importance of purity and develop a personal relationship with God and True Parents. "Spreading the FLU -- Forgive, Love and Unite" was the workshop theme.



Who am I?

The topic of the first day of the workshop was "Identity." The children reflected on the question, "What is your identity as blessed children?" Yuval Skupinski answered, "My role as a second-generation member is to restore the world...;" while Mirey Morita expressed the view, "My responsibility as 2nd gen member is to do God's will!"

After lunch, everyone went to a wall climbing facility, where people practice rock-climbing skills. The children had to challenge themselves to reach the top using teamwork and their mind-body unity.

Liya Sasaki said, "I felt so determined to climb up that when I reached the top I felt I could do anything. If you are determined, you can reach any goal in life."

We dedicated the afternoon hours to guiding the children in preparing skits and personal lectures, which they would present later.

Maintain pristine innocence

Purity and its importance was the focus of the second day. After Hoon Dok Hae, we went outside for morning sports. The children, whom we divided into teams, played games to help them learn to work together and bond.

After breakfast, the children heard three lectures, "The Fall," "Purity and Our Responsibility," and "Our Life." Through these, we urged the children to understand how important their purity is and how they can maintain it. Another point we raised was how to distinguish between good and evil.

The next part of the schedule called for watching a movie together. The purpose of this group activity was to exercise the ability to analyze and better discern what is good and what is evil. Through a fruitful discussion after the movie, the children appeared to have grasped which points in the movies were good

to learn from and which points they would be better off discarding. "There were many activities that we could learn from," Emma Mirzaev said, "not only through lectures but also through fun. We watched a movie and we could learn how to distinguish between good and evil." Another child, Mirey Morita, expressed the sentiment, "I want to be much wiser and to distinguish between good and evil."



Interacting with others

The third day began with Hoon Dok Hae, followed by breakfast. Afterward, the participants listened to a lecture about how to connect to God. They learned how they might hear God; that is receive communication from God, and feel God in their lives.

After the lecture, the children took a train downtown and participated in a Challenge Day activity. As part of this, we asked them to do tasks that required them to talk to and interact with people they did not know. As a reward for the teams, the participants ate ice cream together while speaking about their experiences. After lunch, we presented another lecture; this one covered developing and maintaining a relationship with God.

Later in the day, after some additional rehearsal, the children presented their skits. One team performed a sketch on the topic of purity, and the other team did one on the conscience. Following the skits, the staff went with the children to the Jerusalem Forest. After sharing a nice outdoor dinner, each of the children received a prayer candle. The children experienced an individual twenty-one-minute prayer. In this prayer, the children later reported having felt God talking to them and answering their questions. They felt his love and protection. This prayer was very meaningful to them. "Internal change happened for me," Maya Sasaki said, "when we had the special prayer. I felt I understood a much deeper aspect of God's heart much better; it was true and all through my heart." For Miki Morita, it was also something of a turning point. "After the twenty-one minute prayer," Miki proclaimed, "I felt so liberated and closer to God. For the first time, I wasn't afraid of God, and shared with him honestly about everything." For Yaniv Skupinski, it was also a deep experience, "I felt that God was talking to me, and I had the deepest experience with God."

Afterward, they all sat around a fire that the staff had prepared and spoke of their experiences. One of the young adult staff members, Libael Ben Zvi said, "When I looked at the children I felt they are the light and hope for God. I felt so much love toward them, and the need to guide and protect them, which reminded me that God loves me in the same way."



What they took away

After Hoon Dok Hae and breakfast, the participants gave their personal lectures. Some spoke about experiences in which they reconsidered an issue or realized something important. Others described phases in their lives in which they had managed to overcome hardships by using the Divine Principle and by following the true way. They then had some time to write their final reflections. During this time, they also had private conversations with staff members. This was a chance to express questions, thoughts and feelings of a more personal nature. The workshop concluded with a graduation, in which the participants received certificates and gifts.