

How we began singing You Are My Sunshine at the 1976 Yankee Stadium Rally

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Question: Can you please tell us of the background of the rally as well as the role you played?

In the sixty days before Yankee Stadium, we were all witnessing. So many members came from all over the world, especially brothers and sisters from Japan -- so many sacrificed -- and from Korea and Europe. We all worked together -- black, white, yellow. We were young, Father was inspiring us, we were like an army but we went out for goodness, not to hurt anybody. We would sweep the streets in Manhattan and there was a lot of crime at that time. We would

go out and sing. The Go World Brass Band would march through the streets; we would have parades.

We made a sixty-day condition to go out and knock on doors and confirm, at least three or four times, that people would come to the Yankee Stadium. We were confident. Father told us all the time how important this was. Life or death; it was life or death! So sixty days before... I'm reading from Chambumo Gyeong, "Starting today," this was April 1, "We will initiate a national witnessing revival for sixty days to support the Yankee Stadium rally. How do you take part in this? Live as if you represent six thousand years of history; live to restore Adam and Eve, who fell. You're going to indemnify [all this]." (Chambumo Gyeong, book 6, chapter 2, section 5, verse 5) Our mindset was profound, even though we were young. Father was educating us, we were motivated, united. Mr. Kamiyama was the leader of the mobilization. Dr. Salonen was the national president. Dr. Sudo, Rev. Vincenz -- we had great leaders. But our mindset was that Yankee Stadium was going to be like the rock for David and Goliath. It was going to knock out the evil world and lay the groundwork for Washington Monument. So much was on the line.



Chambumo Gyeong is great. The directory tells you when he said things. Go back to one or two days before Yankee Stadium and you can see how confident Father was, how confident we were.

When the actual event came, it was dramatic. It was cosmic. We had so many members there to prepare and to witness. On the day of the event, the band was playing and we were singing songs. I was in the role of a coordinator for the Barrytown trainees; the first class of UTS, so many great people. We were singing patriotic songs with the Go World Brass Band. The rain started to trickle a little bit, the wind started to blow and the clouds came. I remember it looked as if dark clouds were pouring into this big bowl. I never forget that; it was getting cold and dark and windy. All the

displays were being blown apart; and then the rain came, and it really came.

We did not know what to do and yet every member was united and determined. We knew how important this speech was, especially how important Father's message was to history. We could not let anything block it. The trainees were there and the inspiration came: Let's sing "You Are My Sunshine." So, we started singing. They were used to me getting up and leading the songs, so I got them started and then ran to where the band was with Kevin Pickard who had his trumpet and the Go World Brass Band. The New Hope Singers came out, too, and started singing. They had big microphones of course. Soon, the whole stadium started to sing and rock and they just did not let go.

I heard the people singing with faith, kind of beckoning God to open the skies. I don't know if the singing really changed the weather, but the weather changed and the sun came out. It dried out and it was calm. Most importantly, Father came out, True Mother was there, and he gave truly one of the greatest speeches, I think, of human civilization. I love reading it, especially in today's environment in America, in Korea, Japan and the world with all the problems we are facing. Go back and read that speech. Make it your own speech, so that we can own True Father's words as our own narrative.

It was a great victory. Like a crucifixion and resurrection. That is my memory of the most significant holy

battle that we won victory in centering on True Parents.



Question: What was the environment like around the time of the rally?

In 1976, we had the tail end of the impact of the Vietnam War. President Nixon had resigned over the Watergate issue, and the country was in a very difficult financial situation -- the gas crisis. There were racial issues, and the impact of the radical left, communist infiltration and ideology was everywhere and the media tended to be left wing or biased toward a blame-America-first mindset. National leadership was unclear.

That's why when True Parents' came in the early 1970s, with the Day of Hope Tours, they went all over the country to give a message to wake up Christianity, which was very bold. It was well received in the beginning. Then people began to see that our movement had substance; our young people were committed. We were clear. We were smart. We knew how to communicate. We were united with True Father and True Mother. They are Asian and were preaching and teaching us an ethic of pure love and no sex before marriage, no drugs, no alcohol, so it was a pure movement, and our young people at that time were on fire. They really were on fire.

People became afraid I think. They could not understand it; maybe we did not do a good enough job at reaching out and communicating. The tensions were building up. Groups both on the left, the communist side, and Christian brothers and sisters could not understand, did not understand, did not want to take the time to listen. What was he saying? What did the Principle really say? How did it apply? Organizations were demonstrating outside Yankee Stadium that day. I remember it clearly. Threats had been made to Father's life, Mother's life. Again, look in Chambumo Gyeong, the record is here. The problems of security... Some people didn't want Father to be around and he said that because of the rain some people that had ill intentions gave up that idea -- thought that Yankee Stadium would be a failure.

It was a great victory because of True Parents' incredible boldness and providential wisdom and the unity of our members to unite and support and lift up Father so that he could give that message. It was unlike the time of Jesus Christ when people didn't unite and called for him to be crucified. The opposite occurred. The stadium wasn't entirely full, but almost full, but it gave us burning desire to move through the summer into Washington and make Washington Monument an unquestionable success in the eyes of the world.