

## Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Osaka Holy Ground

Yong Chon Song  
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*Region 9: Gathering to Celebrate 50th Anniversary of the Holy Ground in Osaka*

**Unification Movement Japan:** On February 3rd from 10 am, Gathering to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Holy Ground in Osaka was conducted at the Osaka Church, Osaka, assembling nearly 800 members of Region 9.

The gathering was opened by Kishiwada Church Choir with Song of the Garden and Namida-no-Rekishi (Tearful History), purportedly written in Osaka. Then, Association of Korean Wives in Region 9 enlivened atmosphere of the venue by singing True Father's favorite song Gohyang Mujeong and Ulsan Arirang.

Gyeongbae and Family Pledge were followed by a recorded prayer of True Father at a gathering in Tokyo on January 28th 1965 along with its subtitles on the screen. Many participants shed tears as they listened with rapt attention.

After a representative prayer, brief explanation was given on what had happened from June 1961 when Rev. Masaru Masuda (a 777-couples member) pioneered the mission in Osaka until February 3rd 1965, when True Father decided the Holy Ground in Osaka.

Then, awards were given to four senior members who had joined the Unification Movement before 1965; members who offered early-morning prayer at the Holy Ground for 23 years; and those who continued prayer for 1,000 days to receive the 50th anniversary.



Then, Regional Director Joo Jintae gave an address: "It has been 50 years since Rev. Masuda planted seeds of providence in Osaka. Today, many members of the 20 churches in five parishes serve True Parents of Heaven and Earth, walking the path of establishing Cheon Il Guk". He humbly praised Rev. Masuda for his hard work.

Regional Director Joo has offered a morning prayer at the Holy Ground every day with his wife since he

took office. He encouraged the Youth and Second Generation members by saying as follows:

“Today is a starting point of the next 50 years. Let us head for the 100th anniversary of the Holy Ground in Osaka!” He then emphasized, “True Parents have given us the title of Heavenly Tribal Messiah so that all the humanity acknowledge True Parents by the year 2020, which marks the 100th anniversary of True Father’s birth. We must make efforts as Mother Nation so that the entire 130 million people in Japan will attend True Parents in the next five years.”

Finally, Regional Director Joo said, “This morning, in offering my morning prayer, I asked for God’s permission to distribute Holy Sand to our members so that they could declare their families as the holy land, fulfilling their responsibility as Heavenly Tribal Messiahs centering on the Family Church”. He urged to move in full gear in the Heavenly Tribal Messiah movement.

Next, as the keynote speaker Rev. Masaru Masuda took the rostrum and delivered his commemorative speech. Rev. Masuda first explained how he was baptized as a Christian at the age of 15.

He said, “I was told that becoming a Christian is not about obtaining biblical knowledge but is to live as brothers and sisters centering on Christ’s Love. Yearning for such truth, I visited a church located in a field with muddy feet. Then, a lady whom I have never met before came to me with a pailful of water and said, “Let me wash your feet!”, washing my feet with her bare hands. Can you imagine how impressed I was? A miracle occurred within my heart.”

Then he testified on how he met Missionary Choe Bongchun [Sang Ik "Papasan" Choi] in 1959, when the Unification Movement was based on Yukeisha (Shinjuku, Tokyo), where the first service of the Unification Church was held in Japan. He also gave testimony on True Parents’ visit to Tokyo on January 28th 1965 as if it were yesterday.

“One of the female members asked True Father, ‘Please tell us about Jesus!’ At that moment, True Father lowered his eyes. In a hushed atmosphere, we heard sounds of water drop on the tatami floor. True Father was in tears. He rolled his eyes filled with tears up to the top of his head and said, “He was a miserable man!” Upon hearing this, I felt that True Father had spoken everything about Jesus. I held firm conviction that this man was the Second Advent of Christ.” Rev. Masuda choked up with tears whenever he talked about True Father.

He introduced an episode of services in Yukeisha (July 1959 – April 1960). “Back then, when we offered service at Yukeisha, there were only seven participants. I had a dialogue with Missionary Choe which I still remember. I was in charge of preparing floor cushions for the participants. When I prepared seven cushions as there were seven the day before, Missionary Choe told me, “You have prepared seven cushions because there were seven participants yesterday, Mr. Masuda. Why don’t you have the heart to prepare eight? When will God’s nation be established? Pity on you!”



These were the words he spoke to an immature youth like me. How long you have been in faith is not an important factor in God’s providence. The moment one came to the church is his starting point headed for eternity”, Masuda said, wiping his tears.

After the speech, Regional Director Joo awarded a certificate of appreciation to Rev. Masuda for building the cornerstone of mission within the Kinki region.

Then, small amount of Holy Sand from the Holy Ground of Osaka was distributed to all members of Region 9, who are Heavenly Tribal Messiahs. Everybody made a determination for the next 50 years to head for the 100th anniversary of the Holy Ground by connecting with the Holy Ground which has marked the 50th anniversary.

A luncheon banquet was held with church leaders and district leaders attending. It started with a toast by Mr. Shozaburo Sakaguchi who had joined the church in 1964. It was followed by remarks by the two members who had been awarded for their continuous participation in the Holy Ground Morning Prayer. Then, three district leaders gave testimonies. The event was concluded with powerful cheers of Eok-mansei led by East Osaka parish leader Shinji Matsukura.