

FFWPU Europe and the Middle East: Believers See a Mother, Not a Manager

Knut Holdhus
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[Hak Ja Han](#), [Mother Han](#) August 14, 2022 in Gapyeong, South Korea

세계일보

[Segye Ilbo](#)



Religious affairs reporter Jeong Seong-su (2025)

South Korean daily: "Serious mistake to evaluate finances of charismatic religious movement of Mother Han according to standards used for ordinary corporations or businesses"

The South Korean daily [Segye Ilbo](#) published on 8th May 2026 an [article](#) titled "[The Sacred Weight of Motherhood and Religious Assets in Our Time](#)". The [opinion piece](#) by religion reporter Jeong Seong-su (정성수) is a strongly sympathetic commentary defending [Hak Ja Han](#) (한학자) against ongoing scrutiny by South Korean investigative authorities regarding the management and use of religious funds.

The author argues that government investigators are making a serious mistake by evaluating the finances of a charismatic religious movement according to the standards used for ordinary corporations or businesses. To the writer, this approach misunderstands the spiritual nature of religious leadership and ignores the emotional bond between believers and their leader.

In South Korea, religion often occupies a uniquely influential place in public life. A religious leader is not always viewed simply as administrator of an institution or manager of an organization, but may be regarded by followers as a spiritual parent whose authority is deeply personal, symbolic, and

emotional.

This cultural and religious context is important for understanding [Jeong's opinion column](#) about [Hak Ja Han](#), the co-founder and leader of the [Family Federation for World Peace and Unification](#), which in Korea

often is referred to simply as [Unificationism](#) (통일교).

The [article](#) begins with a reflection on the meaning of parenthood, especially motherhood, in Korean culture. May in Korea is associated with family celebrations such as Parents' Day, and the author uses this atmosphere to evoke feelings of gratitude and longing toward parents who sacrifice themselves for their children. Parents are portrayed as people who willingly suffer hardship so their children can live more comfortably. This idea of selfless, downward-flowing love becomes the central metaphor of the essay.

The writer then connects this idealized image of motherhood to [Hak Ja Han](#) herself. Many members of her [religious movement](#) refer to her as "True Mother" or "Mother of Peace", titles that reflect a theological understanding of her role. According to the [article](#), followers around the world feel pain and sadness when they see her investigated by authorities because they view the investigation not simply as a legal matter, but as an attack on a maternal and spiritual figure they deeply revere.



*A woman offering a donation at a meeting.
Illustration: Microsoft Designer Image Creator*

A major argument in the [opinion piece](#) concerns the nature of religious money. The author emphasizes that funds within founder-centered religious movements cannot be understood in the same way as the finances of ordinary companies. In a corporation, money belongs to shareholders or legal entities and is managed through standardized accounting systems. But in charismatic religious communities, the writer argues, donations are given not merely to maintain offices or pay salaries. Instead, believers see their contributions as offerings dedicated to a spiritual mission, a vision for peace, or the fulfillment of sacred purposes associated with the movement's goals, the founder's vision, and religious leadership.

The [article](#) describes these funds as "[providential funds](#)" (섭리 자금), meaning money devoted to carrying out a divine or

spiritual mission. From this perspective, the resources controlled by the religious leader are not personal luxury assets, nor are they ordinary corporate accounts. Rather, they are viewed as part of a sacred trust between the leader and the believers.

Religion reporter Jeong further argues that many religions throughout history were not fully institutionalized while their founders were alive. During the lifetime of a founder, movements often rely more on personal authority, charisma, and symbolic leadership than on rigid administrative systems. Only after the founder's death do many religious organizations become more bureaucratic, regulated, and corporate in structure. Therefore, the author claims, it is historically and religiously naïve to apply modern business standards too rigidly to a living religious movement led by a charismatic figure.

The [article](#) also warns that such investigations could create dangerous precedents. If governments use ordinary corporate accounting logic to judge religious organizations without considering their theological and historical context, the writer fears this could eventually become a political tool for targeting unpopular or controversial religions.

To strengthen the portrayal of [Hak Ja Han](#) as a humanitarian and maternal figure, the [article](#) highlights several examples of her international activities. One major example is her visit to Gorée Island in Senegal, a place historically connected to the Atlantic slave trade. According to the [article](#), she wept there as though mourning children abandoned in the suffering of history. The author interprets her emotional response not as political theater, but as an expression of universal motherhood and compassion for humanity.

The [essay](#) also points to humanitarian efforts connected to her leadership, including the donation of a relief ship called Peace Wings to help residents of the island who lacked adequate medical services. The author uses this example to argue that financial resources under her management have been used for humanitarian purposes rather than personal gain.

Another major example discussed is the Sunhak Peace Prize, an international award established to honor individuals who contribute to peace, human welfare, and future generations. The [article](#) presents the prize as evidence that religious wealth can serve broader public purposes beyond the interests of a single organization. In the author's view, this demonstrates that [Hak Ja Han](#) sees herself not as an owner of

wealth, but as a caretaker temporarily entrusted with resources meant to benefit humanity.



At the House of Slaves on the island of Gorée in Dakar, Senegal on 19th January 2018, [Hak Ja Han](#), [Mother Han](#), praying for the liberation of the souls of the estimated 10-12 million victims of the Atlantic slave trade. According to UNESCO, from the 15th to 19th century, Gorée was the largest slave trading centre on the African coast

The [column](#) also refers to painful legal disputes within her own family over church-related assets. Rather than interpreting these disputes as evidence of internal corruption or personal greed, the writer frames them as proof of her determination to protect what followers believe are sacred public assets built through the sacrifices and devotion of believers worldwide. The [article](#) emphasizes that she often prioritized missionaries and suffering people over even her own biological family members, reinforcing the image of self-sacrificing motherhood.

Toward the end, the tone becomes more openly political and cautionary. The author argues that the investigation risks appearing like a "targeted investigation" aimed at damaging the symbolic legitimacy of the [movement](#) while harming ordinary employees and families connected to it. Although the [article](#) acknowledges that law enforcement must remain impartial, it insists that authorities should also exercise restraint and respect toward the unique historical and religious character of faith communities.

Ultimately, the [article](#) is less about accounting or legal technicalities than about competing ways of understanding religious authority. One side sees financial management primarily through the lens of legal accountability and institutional transparency. The other sees religious leadership through the lens of spiritual symbolism, sacrificial motherhood, and collective mission. The writer clearly favors the latter interpretation and urges society to look beyond stereotypes or public hostility toward religious groups that may be controversial.

For non-Korean readers, the [article](#) offers insight into how religious devotion, Confucian-influenced ideas of parenthood, charismatic authority, and modern legal institutions can collide within contemporary Korean society. Whether one agrees with the [article](#)'s arguments or not, it reflects a worldview in which religion is not merely organizational, but deeply familial, emotional, and symbolic.

Text: Knut Holdhus, editor

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matters for the cause of peace



From the large international [Marriage Blessing](#) ceremony for 2,100 couples in Gapyeong, South Korea on 2nd May 2026. Photo: [FFWPU](#)

A congratulatory message delivered by Imboni Prophet Samuel Radebe, the founder of The Revelation Spiritual Home (TRSH), a faith organization with more than 4 million members across southern Africa. The message was given in [Gapyeong](#), South Korea 2nd May 2026, at the celebration of the 66th [Holy Wedding](#) anniversary of the [True Parents](#) as well as the first anniversary of the [entrance into the Cheonil Sanctum](#) in the Cheonwon Temple. Slightly edited version.

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Our beloved [Holy Mother Han](#), distinguished religious leaders, dear newly [blessed](#) couples, ladies and gentlemen, it is with heartfelt gratitude and honor that I am here to address you on this occasion of the [holy wedding](#) ceremony, the celebration of the 66th [Holy Wedding](#) anniversary of the [True Parents](#) as well as the first anniversary of the [entrance into the Cheonil Sanctum](#) in the Cheonwon Temple.

The [Holy Wedding](#) with [Father Moon](#) took place in 1960 as the [Marriage Supper of the Lamb](#). It opened the way for millions of [marriage blessings](#) that followed.



Imboni Prophet Samuel Radebe and [Mother Han](#) at a large [Marriage Blessing](#) ceremony at FNB Stadium (Soccer City) in Johannesburg, South Africa on 7th December 2019. Photo: [FFWPU](#)

I'm grateful that I could take part and host many of these [holy weddings](#) in South Africa in 2018 and 2019.

Our world is currently suffering from many problems, and family breakdown is the major cause of all of them.

Ceremony

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I fully concur with **Father** and **Mother Moon** that peace begins with me. Peace begins with my family. Unless we address family issues with a spiritual and divine perspective first, there is no way we can create peaceful and loving families.

A spiritual problem needs a spiritual solution. To the couples who will be **blessed**: Thank you for taking the vow to create our Creator's loving and faithful families!

In our time, such unions carry an even deeper purpose to help restore humanity to a path of righteousness, peace and order. At its core, **marriage** is the foundation upon which a structured and sustainable family is built. It is a union between a man and a woman, each bringing distinct yet complementary energies essential for the balance and continuity of the family unit.

A masculine energy grounded in logic and leadership, a feminine energy rooted in nurturing, intuition and creation work together to form a harmonious whole.

In this balance, the strength of the family and ultimately of society is sustained. For this reason, those who enter into the covenant of **marriage** must recognize their alignment with the spiritual realm.

I often advise that the decision to marry should not be made in isolation. One must involve the Creator, the deities and one's good ancestral guides. While we may believe we know what we want, the spiritual realm sees beyond our limited understanding and guides us to what is truly aligned with our purpose.

Each of us has been brought into this world with a purpose to fulfill. Therefore, the person you choose as your life partner must be aligned with that purpose. There is little more painful than being bound in a union that does not save your destiny. May our Creator's grace be with you, each and all of you!



Mother Han together with the recipients of the 2025 Sunhak Peace Prize Founders' Award – Goodluck Jonathan, President of Nigeria 2010-2015, and Dr. Samuel Radebe – at the award ceremony in Seoul on 11th April 2025. Screenshot from live transmission by PeaceTV

Last year, I had the privilege to take part in the procession as we had the **entrance ceremony**. Time flies so quickly. One year later, here we are celebrating the anniversary.

It is just unfortunate that this is taking place without the chief architect, **Holy Mother Han**. As I said last year after I visited her at the **detention center**, she is going through an unintentional sacrifice for something greater to come.

We need to believe and unite with her at this point, the very most important point in human history. **Holy Mother Han** is going through a course that will yield great fruits very, very, very soon. As a mother, she is going through labor pains to deliver a new Korea and a new world.

I said **last time**, "Let us be on fire!" Testify about her great accomplishments. The spirit world expects us to do just that. Be on fire!

I heard that she has been **nominated for the Nobel Peace**

mother that she has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. This is very good. The world needs to know and recognize what she has done for the sake of world peace.

It is amazing that we, with such a diversity of spiritual systems, religions, cultures, traditions and nationalities can come together to open our minds, to harmonize with each other and to share our concerns about the future of humankind.

I would like to congratulate and commend our beloved Holy Mother Han for this accomplishment. True Mother, we love you very much.

Closer to my conclusion, I am an “Imboni”, a spiritual guide in our language, who practices African indigenous spirituality – ancient. I also got my calling when I was 16 years old.

When you are spiritually attuned, you can recognize genuine spiritual leaders. It was not difficult for me to recognize Holy Mother Han.

Father and Mother Moon have been specially anointed by our Creator, and throughout their lives together, they have made tremendous contributions towards world peace.

True Mother is giving hope to us in Africa. In Africa, we are so proud of her. Only fools reject her and the very great achievements that she has accomplished.

I said last year, “If Korea cannot recognize and appreciate her, we will take her to Africa.”

Brothers and sisters, please wake up and be on fire. The Holy Sanctum is God's dwelling. This is truly a masterpiece of Heaven's ingenuity. People from all races, nationalities and cultures will come here.

True Mother is the glue that is bringing us together. She is calling us to cooperate, to work together in harmony and unity, to create and build one human family under God.

In conclusion, “Happy celebrations!” My wife and I wish all the couples here a blessed family life. United we can create a world of lasting peace to all humanity.

As the saying goes, united we stand, divided we fall. To tackle the problems of this world, it is about time leaders of different faith traditions stand together.

Holy Mother Han, we are with you!

Thank you very much. Kamsa hamnida! (“Thank you” in Korean)

Prophet Samuel Radebe is the founder of The Revelation Spiritual Home (TRSH) in South Africa. He has devoted his life to building religious harmony and peace through the integration of African tradition, spirituality and Christian faith. In recognition of his dedication and many works, he was awarded the 2025 Sunhak Peace Prize Founders' Award.

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Featured image above: Prophet Samuel Hadebe

delivering a congratulatory address at the commemorative ceremony held prior to the [Marriage Blessing ceremony](#) in Gapyeong, South Korea on 2nd May 2026. Photo: [FFWPU](#).

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