

Epiphany [about True Mother]

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Hak Ja Han - date and location unknown

A couple of days ago, something meaningful happened to me that I wanted to share. I call it an "epiphany," meaning it was more than just an everyday realization. I'm sharing here because I hope these words might be helpful to others. We continue to deal with challenges to our faith, now seemingly coming from all directions.

First a little context:

Every day since meeting and joining the Unification Church in Oakland 41 years ago, I have had to overcome challenges. (Sound familiar to anybody?) Living as a full-time Unificationist required personal sacrifice. In my case, it meant giving up a job, apartment, vehicle, etc. and living communally in very humble situations. It later involved 2-years of MFT fundraising around Michigan, which

included door to door in neighborhoods when snow was thigh-high, for example. And there are countless other illustrations of challenges I faced. We all have many incredible tales to tell about our lives as Unificationists, and many people have made sacrifices I can't even imagine.

At any rate, for various reasons (the grace of God, strong ancestors, life of searching, etc.), I have never regretted the decision to follow this pathway, and somehow I never gave up. In recent years, my levels of involvement have ebbed and flowed, but I never lost faith in True Parents and the Divine Principle.

The absence of regret for devoting myself to Unificationism has not meant, of course, the absence of doubt, conflicts with other people, or tremendous personal suffering, which included the failure of my first Blessing. Whenever a serious difficulty came along during these past 41 years, I was forced to confront the question: "Why am I living this way? Is there an alternative?" The answer always came back: "Not really. Not for me."

Why was my answer always the same? Well, primarily it hinged on the answer to my fundamental question about Reverend Moon. "Is he really, REALLY the inheritor of Jesus' mission? Is he really the Messiah and Lord of the Second Advent?" The answer to that one always came back, "Yes, he is."

Why did my soul understand that Father was indeed the man he claimed to be, the one who came to bring all people back into the lineage of God and start building the Kingdom of Heaven on earth? It pretty much boils down to this:

I believe in Father because I believe he could never have endured such misery and suffering without a direct pipeline to the Heart of God. No man could have gone through the things he did -- -- torture and imprisonment, especially Hungnam but also other times including Danbury; the betrayal and abandonment by close associates and loved ones; his unstinting daily life of physical sacrifice, etc., etc., etc., -- relying only on himself. He WAS one with God, and God is where he drew all that strength.

It would have been impossible for any human being to have endured all Father did without a life-altering encounter with Jesus Christ -- who also endured the same sort of impossible circumstances. And I believe Father was sustained by his experiences with the Heart of God. Thus I believe in True Father because I believe in God and in Jesus Christ. I am not a "cultist," I am a realist.

Whenever I read criticisms of Reverend Moon on negative websites (to know the worst of what's being thrown around), I ask myself, "Could I respond in a reasonable way to THAT accusation? Do I know the answer to that question myself?"

There have been some complaints to which I have to say, "I don't really know how to explain that one (whatever it might be)." But I do know that, after 41 years of studying the teachings of Reverend Moon and by observing him personally, I trust that I will indeed understand everything, eventually, by and by.

As a side note, I love the song, "By and By," which we joyfully sang during workshops in the "Chicken

Palace" at Boonville with the talented members of the Oakland church band:

We are tossed and driven
on the restless sea of time;
somber skies and howling tempests
oft succeed a bright sunshine;
in that land of perfect day,
when the mists are rolled away,
we will understand it better by and by.

Refrain:

By and by, when the morning comes,
when the saints of God are gathered home,
we'll tell the story how we've overcome,
for we'll understand it better by and by.

(That great song was written by the son of a slave, Charles A. Tindley, in 1905. You should google his incredible story.)

The First Two Human Beings

For several months, I have been entertaining the notion of writing a fantasy novel about the first two human beings, the first man and the first woman, from the perspective of the woman. I have tried to imagine her as a child running around in the shining world of nature, then at the time of puberty, and into her adulthood and old age. I want the story to be about the experiences of Eve and Adam before, during and after the Fall. The novel consists of nothing more than three pages now, but my imagination has been sparked and I've been thinking about Eve a lot.

I sometimes question the Divine Principle itself. For example, is it really possible that every living human being now and in the past has descended from just two people, Adam and Eve? We know modern science cannot yet establish the genetic origins of the human race, and there is no scientific proof of the emergence of human beings in one specific place or time. Most people these days are taught in secular schools to scoff at the notion of spiritual reality, at the idea that a Divine Creator established a species so radically distinguished from all other species.

However, I believe our human species has been dwelling in ignorance of the most important aspect of human life: Spiritual Reality. We have developed fantastic technological improvements, but we still do not understand fundamental truths. Father used to speak about this point a lot. As he said, we do not even know as a human race whether or not God exists, whether or not there is life after death. We do not live together on this planet in peace and harmony, even though we all want to, so it's clear that science and technology are not the whole truth. We must seek and find spiritual solutions to our universal problems.

Eve's Heart

I do believe in the Divine Principle, its lessons about the Fall of Man and how it changed the trajectory of all humanity. I believe that our Divine Creator never intended the deviation to happen, but it did happen. It happened because the first woman could not achieve the First Blessing: "to be fruitful." And then she went on to unwittingly derail the first man from the fulfillment of his own fruitfulness. And then they multiplied dysfunctionality to the whole world.

In other words, I do believe it was within Eve's heart that the fall of humankind began and took root. I have come to believe, to know in my own heart, that EVE was the key to everything, and that today the fulfillment of the restoration of Eve is the most important event in history. In other words, this really is the era of women upon which the future is hinged.

As I have been imagining her for my book, I see a beautiful, powerful young Eve who joyfully explored the world around her. She might have joined Adam as they learned about the workings of their fascinating environment. From True Father's autobiography, I imagine that Adam's and Father's boyhoods might have been similar. And I can imagine that young Adam might not have wanted his little sister around all the time and that probably Eve might have wanted to do other things at times besides climbing trees and running around.

The archangels were available to the children and protected them, since they had no parents to comfort and educate them as they grew. (Another question I have pondered often: "Who were the physical parents of Adam and Eve; how much could they communicate with them; and how long might they have lived and cared for the new little human children? I believe the parents were humanoids of some sort who were used by God to give birth to the entirely new species with spiritual as well as physical bodies. Anyway.

That's another one for the category: "We will understand it better by and by.")

I imagine that sometime around puberty, Eve's feelings, as well as her body, began to change. She began to yearn for comfort and more companionship. She might have begun to resent the fact that Adam was gone much of the time and didn't seem to notice her when he was home. According to the Divine Principle, Eve was the only female human in the world at that time. All the other sentient beings -- Adam and the archangels -- were male. I wonder how lonely Eve must have been? Girls need girlfriends, and they also need mothers and sisters. Girls need to talk with other females, to share in excruciating detail how we feel, what we think, etc.

Divine Principle teaches that God, who is both masculine and feminine, was there at all times with Adam and Eve, but that while they were still growing up, God's heart could only be partially felt or known. God was always invisible, and I wonder how and when Eve and Adam as children talked with God. I guess they prayed and felt God's spirit within them. I'm assuming they had some special purity and clarity that enabled them to communicate back and forth with God, but we are told that they also needed the guidance of the archangels, Michael, Gabriel and Lucifer.

Somewhere along the way, during the time around her puberty, Eve began the exclusive and secret relationship with Lucifer. She was very lonely and reached out to her teacher because he was there. He was interested in her. It eventually led to her falling into his arms and allowing him into her heart and spiritual body. This is of course the moment in time when the actual "spiritual fall" happened, but many events led up to that moment, and I have been imagining them. Bottom line, I believe that Eve felt the pangs of empty loneliness in her heart and that is what allowed her to open up to the crafty "older man," Lucifer.

Loneliness and "Selfie" Mode

I think all women understand loneliness. I certainly do. In fact, it was that feeling of sadness and loneliness that I experienced the other day which opened my mind to the epiphany triggering this essay.

That morning, I caught myself engaging in a regular habit of internal monologue, which is quite often simply... complaint. I have a talent for being able to catalogue all the ways in which my husband is not what I wish or think he should be. I don't speak these words to him, just to myself: "He doesn't finish the projects he starts around the house. He is never going to finish the work on that guest bathroom... He has no idea what I'm thinking or feeling most of the time... He never suggests that we go out and do something fun... and so on and so on...." The longer this cataloging goes on, the more negative my heart becomes. I must regretfully admit that it has not been a rare occurrence. And while I don't express to him directly my catalogue, I believe he senses it. Thoughts are real, after all, aren't they?

(Note: I am not saying that all complaints are baseless or that we shouldn't try to assert our needs effectively. I am talking about internal attitude toward problems.)

It suddenly occurred to me in the midst of my Catalogue of Complaint that I wasn't thinking about God at all! I couldn't have been much further away from "taking God's viewpoint" toward my spouse or even thinking about God's viewpoint toward the world! How much God is suffering to try to bring love, truth and order back into this world, yet here I am lounging around in my comfortable home complaining! How awful.

Tears sprang to my eyes. I lay down on the bed and wept. I could see that the "camera" of my heart and mind had been on "selfie" mode a huge percentage of my entire lifetime. I mentally turned that camera outward and looked, just looked, at the world and thought about God.

This was not the first time an awareness of my sin came over me, nor the first time I've repented for self-centeredness. But I was spurred toward a deeper awareness this time.

I am sharing these personal thoughts because they dramatically showed me something not just about myself but about all women, I think. While women often do indeed have valid complaints against our circumstances, the people in our lives including our husbands, etc. what do we DO about them? WHERE or TO WHOM do we turn in the midst of suffering, whether it be serious or shallow, and how do we find the best way to proceed?

I believe that this is an age-old question. The first woman, Eve, in the process of falling away from her connection with God, failed to turn herself outward but instead focused on herself, her complaints, her difficulties. There was, of course, unrighteous interference by the archangel which created the circumstances into which Eve descended. But my point is that women -- as well as men -- have a responsibility to seek God's viewpoint in difficult situations. This is basic Divine Principle.

True Woman First, Then True Mother

As I have pondered these past few months about Eve as a real, flesh and blood woman, I have also been thinking a lot about True Mother and her life course. I have thought about how painful and lonely it must have been for her, as a tender young mother, to be essentially alone so much of the time in those early years. She lived in separate quarters from Father and he didn't spend much time with her. She was resented and grumbled against by other people who were supposedly fellow believers, and she wasn't even allowed to receive much care from her own, dear mother. I suddenly grasped for the first time the other day why her isolation and emotional suffering might have been necessary, in light of the Principle of Restoration.

Of all the women in the world, True Mother was chosen to overcome the sin and failure of Eve. She had a unique upbringing under the guidance of her stalwart mother, and she also had great personal, spiritual stamina. Hak Ja Han learned to turn to God as her Teacher early in her life. God was her only true Comforter in her times of sorrow, and this relationship was particularly necessary for her in those first confusing years of marriage. Because of that, she became the true woman that Eve never became.

Hak Ja Han was the first woman in human history, I believe, to fulfill the First Blessing. She was the first woman to stand alone and bond with the Heart of God as God's true daughter. True Mother first became a True Woman as an individual, and then she could become a True Parent. Only in 1968 could Father establish the first God's Day, and that was because of True Mother's achievement -- as a woman -- of God's first commandment: to be fruitful.

As mentioned above, I try to understand what negative people are saying about our movement and to answer in my own mind the accusations made on internet sites seeking to tear down the "Moon movement." But now we are observing accusations against True Mother from people who purport to be members of the Unification movement, who claim to believe in the Divine Principle and everything else Father taught. In many ways, this is much more hurtful to members like myself than angry words thrown against us from "the outside."

Taking the same approach, I try to find answers -- within myself and through prayer -- to the charges of "failure," etc. being made by people in the so-called Sanctuary Church.

What hit me for the first time this week was that, just as True Father could never have survived his suffering life course without a direct and binding connection to God, the same is true for Mother. She also had to achieve an unbreakable bond with God. I believe that True Mother could never have survived and endured as Father's lifelong companion and continuing today without having achieved complete oneness with her first True Love, God. And that is my answer in a nutshell to the accusations coming from Sanctuary.

There is no other way I can explain how Mother could have survived all these years with sanity intact except by becoming one with God in heart. I believe that she fulfilled the restoration of the First Blessing -- a much more arduous task than Eve's original responsibility -- during those first years of her marriage. Divine Principle teaches that once the bond of heart with God is settled, there is no more possibility of falling. The love with God is so sweet, so deep, that nothing can tempt a man or woman away. Nothing.

I believe that only God could have embraced, sustained, and educated Hak Ja Han, giving her the confidence to go forward no matter what. She continues to this day to persevere and to fulfill her mission as the first True Woman and the first True Mother in history. This is my faith based on personal observation, logic and prayer. Because I am a woman, I believe I can appreciate Mother's achievements in profound ways that are very difficult for most men to grasp.

That is my "epiphany" which I have felt impelled to share. I pray that it might be helpful to you, too. I still believe and trust that we are all "marching to the blessed land of Canaan with delight..." as the song goes. We all stand on a foundation of victories achieved by the True Parents, each of whom found the strength they needed -- not, primarily, from one another but from God first.

We can and must find that same strength from our own relationship to God. And because they did, we know we can, too! This I believe. God bless you.