

Father's Life in His Own Words - Part 41

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Republished by International HQ Mission Office January 23, 2022



Stepping into Freedom and Cataclysmic War

From the viewpoint of God's providence of restoration, Western civilization by all means needs to be connected to Asia. Flesh and blood, spirit and body, and all jeongseong conditions established by Western civilization have to be brought here. It was only in 1950 that representatives of sixteen nations came to Korea, and while they were here, they were engaged in fierce fighting.

The birthplace of the Messiah is the homeland. Those soldiers who fought in the Korean War sacrificed themselves for the liberation of our homeland. We can conclude that from the perspective of God's providence, the military conflict in Korea triggered an international mobilization to shed blood for the liberation of the homeland. Heaven mobilized men and women to Korea from all democratic nations that profess Christianity to sacrifice for the liberation of Korea, a providential nation that with the advent of the True Parent had become the ideal homeland. Heaven brought them to fight.

Would there have been such a thing as the Korean War had Christianity accepted the Unification Church? It would not have occurred. It would have taken at most three years to secure a complete nationwide foundation. Within seven years, a worldwide foundation would have been laid. The Korean War, which began on June 25, 1950, was a conflict in the midst of this seven-year course. Because Christianity did not accept me, Satan invaded and established a foundation based on the number seven. Therefore, we see the emergence of two enemies - communism and Christianity. Communism emerged on the worldwide level at that point in history. Had communism not secured a foothold on Korean soil, it would not have grown to command the power it did in the world. All of that would have melted away in my hands.

The bombing of Hungnam by B-29s

On August 1, 1950, a heavy bombing attack was carried out with B-29 bombers on the Hungnam fertilizer factory.^[1] Not only did I foresee this attack, but I also knew and explained to those close to me that God would protect anyone who stayed within twelve meters of me. I was meditating calmly amidst all of the heavy bombing. It did not worry me at all. I was concentrated on the ideal world that awaited us in the future. I knew that for God, sending a person with a providential mission like mine to the spirit world at that point would amount to a loss of cosmic proportions. God was willing to pay any price to protect me. In fact, He had no other choice.

Such were my thoughts while those around me were worried and their facial expressions got ever tighter. In the midst of explosions ripping through the Hungnam factory, people were shouting that they were going to die. That was the situation I was in.

Prisoners to the front line

Soon after the Korean War broke out on June 25, the communists began mobilizing all of their prisoners to the front line, where they were being sent to die as cannon fodder. At some point, about eight hundred prisoners, out of roughly a thousand, were ordered to march to a meeting point fifty kilometers from the prison. We marched out in obedience to the order from the central command for more soldiers for frontline combat.



Hungnam after the bombing

About eight hundred people moved from Hungnam toward Wonsan and Jeongpyeong.^[2] Originally, we would have started out by railroad but a section of track had been destroyed by bombing. The prisoners travelled fifty kilometers on foot. At that point, there were only seventy or eighty prisoners left behind at Hungnam. Most of the prisoners were taken to fight on the front line.

I was among the eight hundred. It was dangerous to move by day because of the heavy bombing, so we marched through the night starting at eight in the evening and stopping after dawn, thus covering about twenty-five to thirty kilometers a day. Since trains could also run only by night, it had been arranged that we would arrive at a station by 4:00 am.

However, that train did not come at the appointed time because of an accident, and the group of prisoners had to stay put for a few days. Because too few guards were escorting too many prisoners, the guards feared problems might arise and ordered a retreat to the prison. Three days later, the prisoners were ordered out again. This time, however, I was allowed to stay behind. I was the only one out of the original eight hundred whom they left behind. That is how I survived.

The end of the ordeal

How does the story end? The gates of the prison did finally open. It was time to go. Wonsan was the very first place to be retaken by the South Korean contingent under the UN Forces. Our soldiers entered Pyongyang on October 19. However, Wonsan had been taken at dawn on October 15 or 16. Therefore, the Hungnam area was the first piece of the North Korean territory retaken by the allied forces. That incursion forced our prison guards to flee and allow me to escape.

All these events occurred as they did because God was desperate to save one person, His son. On October 12, about seventy prisoners with sentences of seven years or more were taken ten kilometers into the mountains and executed. Since my prison term was five years, my turn was to come two days later. You can see why God must have worked feverishly.

As I looked out of the cell window on the night of October 13, it already looked as if changes were occurring. The prison guards fled on October 14 because UN Forces were approaching Hungnam; so we were able to get out of the prison. The UN forces launched a general offensive and at two o'clock in the morning on that day we gained our freedom.

If you conceive of my release as a decision made in a court of law, granting it would have been done not by a judge, but by the accuser, Satan himself, who had the final word. I needed Satan's approval to be freed. Because I successfully accomplished all that had been required of me, soldiers from the archangel nation [the United States], with other troops making up the UN forces, fought back against North Korea and were able to liberate me. This is how I came out of prison.

The fact that on October 14, 1950, just a day before my scheduled execution, UN troops led by General MacArthur freed me is evidence that my salvation was accomplished entirely by God's grace and power. A condition was established for the whole democratic world to receive benefits from the UN forces having liberated me from prison. In other words, because the UN troops played a direct role in my

deliverance from the Hungnam labor camp, the democratic world established a providential connection that allowed it to be saved and blessed.

October is the month of liberation for the Unification Church. Both my liberation from Seodaemun Prison on October 4, 1955, and from the Hungnam labor camp fall in the same month. Tears well up in my eyes just thinking about this. For me, this time marked the loss of a people. I also lost my family, my beloved wife and son.



A view of the Chong-no borough, the central shopping area of modern Seoul, as it looked in October 1950

My prison life - history and tradition

Do you know about my lifestyle in prison? A tradition of visiting these holy sites should be established; how precious is the feeling of self-confidence and liberation people would have as they fulfill their promise to follow in my footsteps through the historical tradition I have established! It is for this reason that I asked Kim Il Sung to open my hometown to visitors. I asked him to open both my hometown and the Hungnam labor camp; these sites will become educational facilities with training courses designed to correspond to the number of years I spent at each.

My imprisonment at Hungnam was not a setback for me. God has worked through my life course to turn the experience at Hungnam into a powerful source of inspiration that brings new life to the hearts of young people who study the Unification Church doctrine as it spreads to all parts of the world.

There is no better place than a prison to learn about what one is really worth, and to re-create one's character. If we are to train young leaders to take on the task of world unification, I think we might need an official survival-training course.

Determined to make a fresh start

You feel quite young when you turn thirty. When I compare that time to now, it really was the era of my youth. Leaving prison at that age, I resolved to make a fresh start, a new beginning in my life. It did not matter how hard and bitter my experience in North Korea had been up to that point. My mind was set on forgetting all the hardships and thinking of what had happened not as an impediment or loss but as stimulation for that fresh start on the road to accomplishing my historic mission. I was adamant, knowing I was responsible to accomplish my mission at any cost. I made this strong resolution in my thirties while my body was still in its prime. My release from prison was equivalent to resurrection and marked the starting point of proclaiming the truth of Divine Principle.

[1] A U.S. government chronology of the Korean War states that on that day, "Forty-six B-29s of the 22nd and 92nd Bombardment Groups bombed the Chosen Nitrogen Fertilizer Factory at Hungnam, the largest chemical plant in the Far East."

[2] An area abutting Wonsan; not to be confused with South Korea's Chung Pyung