

Mother of Peace
And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes
A Memoir by Hak Ja Han Moon February 2020
Draft Version

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The true meaning of sacrifice

My mother officially joined the Unification Church in Seoul on December 15, 1955. Early in the following year, a small yet historic first step was made as the Chuncheon Unification Church convened its first public Sunday service at a home in Yaksa-dong. I was a young girl of 13 who had just graduated from Bongui Elementary School.

One day when the sun was shining brightly, my mother said to me, "Let's go to Seoul for the day." Without knowing why we were going, I followed her. That was the day I first met Father Moon. Cheongpa-dong Church, where we met, was a small, two-story wooden house. The Korean government had categorized it as "enemy property" because it had been owned by the Japanese during their occupation of our country. It was more like a home than a church.

I greeted Father Moon politely, and as he returned the greeting, he asked my mother, "Who is this child?"

"This is my daughter," she replied.

With a look of surprise, Father Moon gazed at me as he said to my mother, "You have such a pretty daughter." He then closed his eyes as if in meditation, and asked my name.

I politely replied, "My name is Hak Ja Han."

As if struck by something, Father Moon spoke very softly to himself, "Hak Ja Han has been born in Korea. Hak Ja Han has been born in Korea. Hak Ja Han has been born in Korea." After saying this three times, he began expressing gratitude to God, saying, "You sent such a magnificent daughter, named Hak Ja Han, to Korea. Thank you." Then Father Moon spoke to me as if he were asking me to gather my resolve: "Hak Ja Han, you will need to make sacrifices in the future."

"Yes!" I replied, surprised at my own forwardness.

On the way home on the train, my mother and I thought the encounter was curious. "How strange," she said. "Why would he repeat that you were born in Korea three times?" As we fell into silence, I contemplated the word "sacrifice." The word Father Moon used took on a meaning different from what I had learned in textbooks. What he was alluding to was a higher dimension of sacrifice, a nobler and more complete sacrifice. What you sacrifice is important, but why you make that sacrifice is even more important.

As I listened to the rhythmic rumble of the train and looked out the window at the scenery as it slipped by, I couldn't stop thinking about what Father Moon had said. I thought about what I might need to sacrifice for. From that day, the word "sacrifice" was engraved in my heart. Thinking back as the person called to live as the Mother of peace, I realize that, over time, "sacrifice" became a name I could call myself.

God is my Father

From the time I could understand words, my maternal grandmother, Jo Won-mo, consistently taught me one thing: "God is your Father." She went so far as to say, "Your mother is like your nanny who is raising you as God's daughter." Since I had been surrounded by an atmosphere of faith even while in my mother's womb, I accepted this without a second thought. When I heard the word "God," my heart would open unreservedly and fill with warmth.

My mother did not mind investing herself body and soul for the purpose of raising me to reject secular life and follow God's way. She lived with single-minded devotion in absolute unity with and obedience to God. After joining the Unification Church, our family moved to Seoul, where she worked even harder to protect me from the world's temptations. As a result of her dedication, God allowed me to see myself as a noble crane.

Even as an adolescent in middle school, I poured my heart into quiet reading and study. I attended the Seongjung Girls Middle School, located in Sajik-dong of Seoul's Jongno district. Situated at the southern foot of Mount Inwang, it was a small school that seemed always bathed in sunlight. From the moment of its founding, that school shared in the suffering of the Korean people. It was established in May 1950, but had to close less than a month later due to the Korean War. After the war, its doors reopened and, true to its mission, the school prepared many girls to become talented women who would help build a prosperous country. In 1981, the school moved to the Eunpyeong district of Seoul, and in 1984, its name was changed to Sunjung Girls' Middle School. Our Tongil Group acquired this school in 1987 and brought it into the Sunhak Educational Foundation. I have continued to give it support and attention.

In middle school I spoke little and developed a calm personality. I studied hard and always ranked at the top of my class. I was pretty and modest and, as I was also quiet and well-behaved, I received love and attention from my teachers. My school life was uneventful; I only remember that I missed a day or two of school in the first year when I became quite sick. In my second and third years, I received an award for earning the highest grades in my class. I preferred to read in a quiet spot and listen to music rather than engage in social life or sports. My hobby was drawing. I enjoyed art and had some talent, but set aside the possibility of becoming a professional artist.

For all three years of middle school I was the class representative on the student council, and in the third year I was the head of the student activities committee. I led many student activities, and this awakened my leadership abilities. One day when the entire school was gathered, I went to the podium and announced the decisions of the student council. The teachers complimented me on my poise and confident attitude. After witnessing this side of me, which they had not seen before, one teacher commented, "Hak Ja seems gifted ...I thought she was just quiet and docile, but actually she shows good leadership skills."

* * *

During adolescence, I didn't worry about my life or losing my way. I credit this to my grandmother and mother instilling in me a deep faith in God and the habit of living in attendance to Him. My mother, in particular, strictly guided my life of faith. Yes, there were times when I thought it difficult and wearisome, but I am grateful now, for it prepared me to blossom as the only begotten Daughter of God who one day would meet the only begotten Son of God.

Within that atmosphere, I grew roots of unshakable faith. I read a lot. I enjoyed reading tales of the saints, and particularly *The Good Earth*, by Pearl S. Buck. The characters in that book struggle against nature and fate. The story helped me realize that ultimately we must return to nature's embrace, represented in that book by the earth. It is human nature to cling to God's embrace. I earnestly wished to be together with God, and for that reason I devoured songs and novels about the love of one's hometown.

I knew from a young age that God is my Father, and naturally connected everything I read to God. I cut off entirely from the harsh secular world and lived a chaste life as if I were a nun. I was aware that a higher power was guiding me, that my path had been prepared in Heaven.

Especially during this time, the Bible was my close companion. I cried myself to sleep many nights after reading about God's history of creation, the tragic Fall, and God's work of salvation carried out through historical figures who took responsibility at the behest of Heaven. I learned how they sacrificed themselves, and realized that God created us so He could love us as His children. After reading God's bitter history and His desire to embrace us, even though we give Him only pain and sadness, it was not just once or twice that I lay awake, unable to sleep, my heart aching for Him. I naturally continued to ponder ever more deeply what Teacher Moon had said to me about sacrifice. The question, "What can I sacrifice for God?" was shaping my life.

* * *

Without sacrifice and service, one cannot even begin to think one is living for the sake of others rather than for oneself. As I strictly cultivated my faith from a young age, I cherished a dream deep within my heart. That dream was to liberate my Heavenly Father who, throughout history, gave Himself for the salvation of humanity. I wished to free Him from the chains of our fallen history.

We cannot meet God from a position of reigning over others. He finds us when we are silently working for the sake of those in greater difficulty than ourselves. I came to know that when we think about God's will from the lower position, the position of offering and self-sacrifice, God's bitterness washes away and He will come to us.

During the postwar years, the streets of Seoul were full of the wounded. Numerous children, including war orphans, were suffering from hunger and disease. Few people were able to get timely treatment when they became sick. I wanted to heal people's injuries, relieve their pain, and guide them to a brighter world. As it was time for me to enter high school, in the spring of 1959 I entered St. Joseph's Nursing School.

Heavenly and earthly phoenixes

In the late 1950s, it wasn't easy for a single mother. My mother managed to make ends meet by doing any

odd job that came her way. She did not rest even a moment in her devoted life of prayer, and in that way she triumphed over those hardships and tribulations. One day, however, she announced to her small family, "I've been living meaninglessly; I must live a life of greater value."

She left my maternal grandmother and me in the care of my aunt and moved into the Cheongpa-dong Church, and dedicated herself completely to church activities. She chose to take on the most menial of tasks. People would try to dissuade her, but she pursued such work with a joyful and grateful heart. She had lived a life of devoted faith in North Korea, greater than anyone, but started at the bottom in the Unification Church.

She overworked herself, however, and her body grew weaker and weaker until she became seriously ill. Luckily, a church member she knew from the Inside-the-Womb Church took her in. This person, Mrs. Oh Yeong-choon, was like a sister to her. They lived together in the Noryangjin neighborhood, and as they cared for each other, my mother gradually recovered her health.

While at nursing school, I attended Cheongpa-dong Church every Sunday. One day, when my mother saw me there, she took me to a corner and softly whispered, "A few nights ago, I had a dream that was hard to understand."

"What did you dream?" I asked.

"There were women from church wearing white holy robes and standing there holding pink flowers," she said. "Then I saw you walking toward Teacher Moon." At that time, we called Father Moon "Teacher." "All of a sudden, thunder roared and lightning crashed from the sky and struck one spot. There you were, and other women all looked at you enviously." She paused, collecting her thoughts. "That's when I woke up. I think it means that something will happen that will shake the world."

"I think so, too," I replied. "I'm sure it is a prophetic dream, but I don't want to guess more than that."

My mother did not imagine that this dream was a revelation from God, a prophecy that her only daughter would be called to become the True Mother who would give her life for the world. But I had been thinking constantly about the word "sacrifice" and had determined to live a life of sacrifice for God. This dream fit with that, and I had a sense of its meaning.

In the late autumn of 1959, Father Moon conducted a national missionary workshop at the Cheongpa-dong Church, and I participated with my mother. I was on one side of the overcrowded church, busy with the workshop, but could see that on the other side, elder sisters were quietly working on another important matter. A few months earlier, senior grandmothers of deep faith had begun preparations for Father Moon's marriage. They were considering which among the women of the church could be God's choice to be his bride. As I was only a schoolgirl and so much younger than Father Moon, my name would not have come up.

Then one day, one of the sages among the grandmothers sought out Father Moon to tell him about her dream. "I saw many flocks of cranes flying down from the heavens," she told him, "and even though I kept trying to shoo them away, they came and covered Teacher Moon." Father Moon provided no interpretation, so the elder sister continued with confidence: "I believe my dream is revealing God's will, that your bride's name will include the Chinese character for *hak* (crane)."

Shortly after I heard that, my mother told me another revelation she had received in prayer. A phoenix flew down from heaven, and another flew up from the earth to meet it. The phoenix from heaven was Father Moon. It brought to her mind her dream from years before, when she went to Daegu to meet Father Moon; the dream in which a pair of golden dragons bowed down in the direction of Seoul.

My mother thought about what all this might mean, and then one morning at dawn she received a heavenly message. She had just taken a cold shower, and it came as she was reciting our Pledge prayer. "The phoenix descending from heaven represents the True Father," she announced, "and the phoenix rising from the earth represents the True Mother." My mother was happy with this understanding, but she continued quietly with the workshop and didn't speak about it.

In the months following my 16th birthday, I matured quickly, and it caught people's attention at church. Members would mention that I looked elegant and neat. I would hear someone say, "Hak Ja is peaceful and virtuous. She is like a crane, befitting her name." And another, "She's also very polite, and if you watch, you will see she is very observant and has clear judgment." I stood out when I was with members of the congregation. People commented that I had an untainted purity, that I was one with God's will, and that I had embraced the virtue of obedience through the difficulties I had endured in North Korea. Hearing such comments, I disciplined myself not to feel proud or act carelessly.

More than anything else for his bride-to-be, Father Moon was looking for a person with a sacrificial and devoted heart of living for others. He did not care about family background, economic status, or appearance. She had to be a woman with absolute faith who could love the world. She had to be a woman who could conceive of saving the world. Because he had been unable to find such a woman, there had been no marriage of the Lamb. He still did not fully know that the heavenly bride, who would become the

Mother of heaven, earth, and humankind, was close by. I had come to understand God's will, but I couldn't say anything. To recognize the bride was Father Moon's mission and responsibility.

The heavenly bride

A short time later, Mrs. Oh Yeong-choon, the devout member who had taken in my mother, went to her job in a clothing store on the second floor of the Nakwon Building in central Seoul. She assisted the store owner at making garments. The owner was a longtime member we called "the prayer grandmother." When Mrs. Oh arrived, the owner was sewing together a man's suit. Mrs. Oh sat next to her as she pumped the wheel of the sewing machine, and asked casually, "Oh, who is the suit for?"

"This suit is for Father Moon" was the grandmother's answer. "He is going to wear it at his engagement ceremony." Mrs. Oh perked up immediately, and her eyes widened as she asked the natural question, "Who is to be the bride?"

"Well," replied the grandmother nonchalantly, "the day of the engagement has been decided, but the bride hasn't been chosen yet. However, the ceremony is going to be held soon, and so I am making his suit."

Mrs. Oh's mind was buzzing. "Who is going to be the bride?" She pondered the question but couldn't come up with any possibilities. Mrs. Oh was a person who often heard God's voice in revelations. In fact, she had been offering prayerful devotions for seven years for the sake of the appearance of the True Mother. She right away took her question to God in prayer, and she received a revelation: "Because Eve fell when she was 16 years old, the heavenly bride needs to be younger than 20."

This had never occurred to her before. It was only then that she understood the logic of God's will. She asked God again and again, "Who is the heavenly bride who is younger than 20?" And before long, she thought of me. "I know Hak Ja Han, who is around 16," she said to herself. "She often sits right next to me in church! Why didn't I think of her? Could it really be her?"

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At 10:00 that evening, Mrs. Oh was making her way home after finishing her work. She was on the Noryangjin bus as it was crossing the Han River when God spoke to her: "It will be Hak Ja. It will be Hak Ja." God's revelation descended upon Mrs. Oh like a wave of energy in the autumn night sky. She arrived in her neighborhood around 11:00 p.m., but instead of going home, she hurried to see my mother, who lived near her.

"Soon-ae, are you sleeping?" "Not yet. Come in!"

"How old is your daughter?" My mother gave her a puzzled look. Mrs. Oh had skipped all formalities and asked a point-blank question. "Why are you visiting me in the middle of the night to ask me how old my daughter is?"

"Don't change the subject; please just tell me." "She's 16, turning 17 next year."

"When is her birthday?"

"She was born in 1943, on the sixth day of the first lunar month. She has the same birthday as our Master. Why are you suddenly asking me such questions?" Mrs. Oh and my mother were old friends. They were the same age, and they had attended the same church in their hometown in North Korea. In addition, their mothers were very close friends. My mother, in fact, was living in Noryangjin, across the street from Mrs. Oh. Mrs. Oh had found this place for my mother when she had fallen into poor health while doing her church work.

Just as abruptly as she had arrived, Mrs. Oh bid my mother good night and departed, leaving my mother to figure out what was on her mind.

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The next day, as soon as it became light, Mrs. Oh was on her way back to work at the Nakwon Building. God's revelation about me completely distracted her, and the workday came and went without her realizing what she was doing. When she finished her work, she went directly to see a fortune teller. To this day, Koreans often consult fortune tellers for guidance about marriage, and that's what Mrs. Oh did. She described to the fortune teller the two persons about whom she was consulting, without mentioning their names. Right away the fortune teller's eyes widened.

"There may be a large gap between the ages of these two persons, but it doesn't matter. They are a match made in Heaven. I have rarely seen such a couple whose fortunes are so aligned." Mrs. Oh felt her heart was about to explode. She calmed herself and went directly to the church to meet our Teacher and tell him everything. As soon as she gained a private space with him, she blurted it out: "Hak Ja Han, the daughter of Hong Soon-ae, is the heavenly bride." She waited for a response, but Father Moon didn't say a word.

* * *

Father Moon had listened to many members suggest who might be his bride, and none of them had paid much attention to me. I did not worry about that. I kept my mind on Heaven. I knew then, and know now, that a person's destiny is not contingent upon external evidence. God is the judge, and it is predestined that the only begotten Son will marry the only begotten Daughter prepared by God, and that this is in the hands of God. I knew it was Father Moon's mission and duty to recognize the only begotten Daughter. I may have been young in years, but my heart toward God was unwavering. I waited for the time.

One day not long after that, hearing the sound of a magpie sitting on the branch of a tree outside the window of my dormitory room, I had a premonition that I was about to receive good news. I went to the window, opened it, looked up toward the sky, and I heard God's voice. Those were days in which God was giving me revelations not only in my dreams but also like waves coming down from the clear blue sky. I heard the words, "The time is near."

It was the voice of God. I had heard it often since I was a child. I had always felt that I would meet a very precious person one day. As if someone were pushing me, I closed my books and left the dormitory. Something was telling me that my mother was not feeling well.

As I was crossing the Han River on the bus, many thoughts flooded my mind. Does crossing the river mean that I am crossing over to a different world from the one in which I have been living? How many stories are embraced by the river, swirling beneath its confidently flowing surface? Is the heart of God, who is searching for us, like this river?

I got off the bus and started walking up the Noryangjin Hill toward my house. As I climbed the slope, an unusually bright winter sun drew me onward in spite of the wind from the Han River blowing against my forehead. When my mother saw me, she did not seem at all unwell; she looked rather excited and gratified to see me arrive. My confusion as to what drew me home dissipated right away, as she held the door open and quickly put on her coat. "I have received a message from the church," she told me. "We have to go there right now."

To me, it was a given that the news that awaited us at the church, whatever it might be, had been prepared by God. The scene of my first meeting with Father Moon, which was just after I had finished elementary school, passed before me like a panoramic vision. I recalled the dream I had had after that meeting. Father Moon appeared in it with a young and gentle face, and I clearly heard God's revelation: "Prepare, for the time is near."

Recalling this strict command from Heaven, walking toward the church, I surrendered myself completely, with a heart filled with trust in my Heavenly Father. "Until now I have lived according to Your will," I said to Heavenly Parent in prayer, "Whatever be Your will and providence, I am one with it already."

Because I knew God's sorrowful grief, a courage based on my faith in God rose up within me. I felt I could gratefully accept whatever might be asked of me. Then I heard God's voice again. I felt the same presence that I felt in the upper room of the Inside-the-Womb Church, when Grandmother Heo anointed me, and when the monk passing by our house had prophesied about me. Bathed in that presence, I heard the words, "Mother of the universe. The time has come." It was like the sound of a gong reverberating in the air. The voice spoke again:

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, and I have been waiting for the Mother of the universe since the creation of the world." When I heard those words, I knew what my future was to be, and it settled in my heart and created an ocean of calm. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve talked with God directly and heard God's words with their own ears. I had had such direct conversations with God from a young age.

I continued walking, going to church while holding my mother's hand, as I had done so many times before.

* * *

My mother and I arrived at the Cheongpa-dong Church. It was February 26, 1960, a day when winter was withdrawing and spring was signaling its advent. Father Moon met with my mother and me all day in order to come to a conclusion about the heavenly bride. He and I talked about many things over the course of nine hours. At his request, I drew him a picture. I spoke clearly as I answered his questions about my hopes and aspirations. Remembering how Jacob received God's blessing at Bethel, I happily, yet seriously, said to him, "I will bear many heavenly children."

What God told Jacob at Bethel came into my mind: "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." I determined that I would embrace all the people of the earth and bring them new life as God's good children.

When Isaac went up Mount Moriah with Abraham to offer a sacrifice, he asked his father where the offering was. Abraham answered that God had prepared a sacrifice, and said nothing more. With that, Isaac, even at his young age, could understand the situation and realize that he was the sacrifice to be

offered to Heaven. Just as Isaac obediently lay upon the altar, I knew that God had prepared me as the heavenly bride and that this was God's predestined providence. I had no questions or doubt in my heart; I had only the desire to keep going on the path. I accepted God's command in a state of complete selflessness.

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On our way back home from this extraordinary day, my mother looked at me with warm eyes. "You are usually so meek and calm; I didn't know you could be so bold." I reflected on the fact that the Holy Wedding is not based on how bold a person is. In order to multiply God's lineage, the True Mother has to bear many good children, and therefore she would have to marry in her teens. Such a bride should be of a patriotic family, I realized as well, with a life of faith inherited over three generations.

Three years before that, a number of single women believers had put themselves forward as marriage candidates before Father Moon. Several around the age of 30, in particular, had high hopes, as Father Moon himself was nearing 40. Even in that circumstance, and having publicly announced the date of the Holy Wedding, Father Moon had maintained silence. He was waiting on Heaven to decide who would be his bride. He knew that God is the one to prepare the only begotten Daughter. Only God can confirm the bride for whom the marriage supper of the Lamb is conducted. God alone knows who is to become the Mother of the universe and the Mother of peace.

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For the salvation of all of humankind and realization of a world of peace, I determined myself and declared before Father Moon that I would rise to the position of the True Parent. I accepted Father Moon as the only begotten Son for the accomplishment of our Heavenly Parent's will. It was God's call to me to become the heavenly bride and the Mother of the universe. I knew that my path would be unimaginably difficult. Yet I pledged I would live for God and absolutely fulfill my mission to save the world.

I pledged before God and Father Moon, "No matter how difficult the path may be, I will complete God's providence of restoration during my lifetime." And then I pledged one more time, "I will do whatever it takes to fulfill our Heavenly Parent's will." I have defined and lived my life with that commitment.

The course of human events is often unpredictable. Church members were so astonished when the news spread that Father Moon had chosen Hak Ja Han, that 17-year-old nursing student, to be his bride. Some people thought it was a false rumor. Some were taken aback. Some rejoiced, others were jealous. I remembered Father Moon's words from four years before, "You will need to make sacrifices in the future," and I knew that each day was going to be a learning experience concerning what that meant.

When my maternal grandmother's ancestor, Jo Han-jun, showed sincere loyalty and devotion to his country, he received the revelation, "I will send to your lineage the princess of God." In return for my ancestor's devotion, his sacrifice with no desire for recognition, God chose our family to exemplify the tradition of loyalty and filial piety. My mother was born to my grandmother, who had deep piety, and I was born to my mother. I trace God's will to send to the world His only begotten Daughter, which has borne fruit through me, back to my ancestor Jo Han-jun.

To fulfill my mission as God's only begotten Daughter, I have a firm belief and unflinching will for the sake of every nation, every religion, every race. Going beyond all fallen world boundaries, I am called to reconcile nations and races with benevolence and love. I am called to be like the ocean that accepts and absorbs the water of all rivers, big and small alike. Embodying our God who is our Heavenly Mother as well as Heavenly Father, I am called to embrace all who are lost and have no one to receive them, with the heart of a parent.

I set these things in my flesh and blood, in my beating heart, and have not for one second forgotten the will that God entrusted to me. Sixty years have passed since our Holy Wedding, and my husband is now not with us physically. More than ever, no matter what my age or physical condition may be, my beating heart drives me forward on the path to become the Mother of the universe and the Mother of peace - one in mind, one in body, one in heart and one in harmony with the One who guides the providence.

Our Holy Wedding Ceremony

Jesus was born to humankind 2,000 years ago. God intended that Jesus find his bride and that they would stand in the position of Adam and Eve, who were lost at the very beginning of human history. Together, Jesus and his bride were to have grown to attain the position of True Parents, providing living examples of a true husband and wife, parents, and family. However, God's hope for Jesus and Israel was not realized. The Lord went a secondary course, dying for us on the cross. We cannot imagine how devastated he must have been! When Jesus returns, his priority is to find the bride, with whom he will create a true family, society, nation and world. Through the True Parents, the sorrows of heaven and earth can be alleviated, and the victorious foundation for God's ideal world can be laid.

In this providence, the prophesied marriage supper of the Lamb, the day of our Holy Wedding, was the turning point, the day when God won His victory and recovered His lost glory. Furthermore, this was a day

of joy for humankind, as it inaugurated a new history in which all can live together not only with their True Father but also with their True Mother.

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At the age of 15, Sun Myung Moon received his mission from Jesus Christ on Mount Myodu. It was a mission that would bring him severe hardship. It led him to study in Japan and to teach God's word in North Korea after Korea's independence, where he would face life-threatening hardships and unspeakable suffering. Communist Party officials and police cruelly tortured him to the brink of death. Tossed out as a lifeless body, he revived and continued his mission, only to be arrested once again and sent to a forced labor camp near the city of Hungnam. It was only the arrival of UN troops that saved him from execution there.

With two of his followers, he headed south to begin his ministry again. Amid the clash of communist soldiers and UN troops, they were among the last to cross the frozen Imjin River into South Korea, and from there they walked hundreds of kilometers to the southern part of the peninsula. After planting his church in Busan he settled in Seoul. Yet his trials continued and once again he was imprisoned, this time by the South Korean government. This course of hardships, during which time he relentlessly focused on teaching many new members about God and the mission of the Messiah, was the course he had to pass through to meet the only begotten Daughter prepared by God, and to hold the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Members of the early Unification Church endured bitter ordeals together with Father Moon. As the year 1960 approached, they were filled with indescribable hope. Father Moon was turning 40, and he had prophesied that this would be the year of the Holy Wedding of God's first Son and Daughter, the only begotten Son and only begotten Daughter. And that promise was fulfilled. At the Cheongpa-dong church, at 4:00 in the morning on March 27, 1960, the first day of the third lunar month, when spring was in full bloom, Father Moon and I held our historic engagement ceremony.

We had invited 40 men and 40 women to witness the ceremony, but members wishing to see us had come in great numbers, and the small church was packed to overflowing. The engagement ceremony, held in two parts, was conducted in a holy atmosphere. It concluded with Father Moon's benediction, reporting the profound meaning of the ceremony to heaven and earth. The 6,000-year history of humankind, he prayed, was the anguished course necessary to receive the True Parents. That Jesus could not become the True Parent was the sorrow of all people, but the day of our engagement ceremony was the blessed day that finally relieved that sorrow.

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Fifteen days after the engagement ceremony, at 10:00 a.m. on April 11, 1960, the 16th day of the third month by the lunar calendar, we conducted the Holy Wedding. Seven hundred or so members chosen from our churches across Korea gathered at Cheongpa-dong Church to attend this splendid event, long awaited by our Heavenly Parent. Because even more members flocked to attend the Holy Wedding than the engagement ceremony, the church was overflowing, and those who could not enter the building filled the alleyway beside it. The atmosphere was nonetheless solemn and reverent.

The small chapel of the church was decorated beautifully and meaningfully for the occasion. The walls and floor were covered with white cloth, and a platform was set up to the left of the door. Dressed in a long, white skirt and top, with a long veil covering my head, I walked down the stairs from the second floor, arm in arm with the bridegroom, as members sang a holy song, "Song of the Banquet." All in attendance warmly welcomed us, and the Holy Wedding ceremony thus commenced. The first ceremony of the Holy Wedding was held in Western-style clothing, and the second ceremony was held in traditional Korean-style clothing, complete with robes and headdresses.

The significance and value of this joyful occasion should have been praised, glorified and honored by all nations and peoples. Yet it was marred by a distressing incident. The day before the ceremony, the Ministry of Home Affairs, responding to a Christian group's accusations, arrested and interrogated Father Moon. He was able to return to his quarters in the church only after being subjected to humiliating questions until 11:00 p.m. Yet under the grace of God and the Holy Spirit, Father Moon and I, and the entire congregation, put aside this painful experience as if it had never happened and conducted the marriage supper of the Lamb with serene hearts.

God's predestined will was that His only begotten Son and Daughter would become one flesh through the marriage supper of the Lamb and that, through them, the dwelling place of God would be with men and women. True men and women are the rightful rulers of creation, the entire universe, heaven and earth. The Holy Wedding finally realized this ideal, which Adam and Eve had failed to achieve. Thus, these ceremonies marked my formal enthronement as the Mother of the universe and Mother of peace.

After the ceremony, Father Moon and I, as husband and wife, ate at the same table for the first time. It goes without saying that newlyweds expect to go on a honeymoon and dream of their cozy life together, but it was not so with us. Our thoughts were fixed only upon God and the church. Nonetheless, I treasured every glance we shared and felt a love infinitely profound, a holy love that we wished to bequeath to all

humankind.

We then changed into bright Korean traditional wedding outfits, and my husband and I sang and danced to return glory to God, enjoying a merry time together with the members. When the members called for the bride to sing, I sang a song called "When the Spring Comes."

*When the spring comes,
azaleas bloom in the mountains
and meadows.
Where the azaleas bloom,
so does my heart.*

Spring signifies freshness and newness. I love spring, as it is the season of hope. Spring brings with it the expectation that, as we leave the cold winter behind, our days will be vibrant with life. It awakens our dreams.

As I sang, I was thinking that the history of the Unification Church should begin anew with this coming of spring. The appearance of the family of the True Parents on earth that day flung open a new door in the history of God's dispensation. The day of the Holy Wedding Ceremony, conducted after we had lived through perilous years, was the day of God's greatest delight.

In the New Testament's Book of Revelation, it is written that the marriage supper of the Lamb will take place when the Lord comes again at the end of times. That prophecy was fulfilled by the Holy Wedding, by which the only begotten Son and only begotten Daughter, lost at the beginning of human history, were brought together as bridegroom and bride and anointed as the True Parents. As we were joined as husband and wife, I made a firm resolution in front of God:

During my lifetime, my beloved husband and I will bring to a conclusion the history of the providence of restoration through indemnity, during which God has laboriously toiled. I know that what hurts God's heart more than anything else are the religious conflicts that take place in His name. Without fail, we will end them.

A small boat on heavy seas

In the side streets and workplaces of South Korea, people were whispering out of worry, anxious over the fate of their nation. "Doesn't it feel like something is about to happen?" one would say, to which his friend would respond, "I feel the same way. We live in troubled times. If only there were someone who could set this world right."

I was sure such worries would soon dissipate. The year of our Holy Wedding Ceremony, 1960, was a turning point, for great changes were taking place both at home and abroad. In South Korea, the people's longing for democracy burst forth, and they ousted the authoritarian Liberal Party. Overseas, John F. Kennedy was elected president of the United States, and we felt the way opening toward a new era.

But history is never that simple. The rifts of the Cold War grew deeper, and conflict worsened between the communist realm and the Free World. A flame of popular outcry for democracy flared up in the Soviet Bloc nations of Eastern Europe, but the state crushed its advocates, and the fire grew dim again. It seemed that the time for peace was not yet at hand. People continued praying for a true leader to appear.

Great changes also were taking place for the Unification Church. Virtually the whole of Korea had stood in opposition to our church, with Christianity issuing the most scathing criticisms. But now, on the foundation of embracing a young woman leader, the True Mother, we began ecumenical dialogues and transitioned from Christian denomination to global religious movement. Our members prayed that we could be a beacon, shining forth a new hope of salvation. In particular, women, who so long have been oppressed, perceived that a true women's movement was being set in motion.

* * *

Three days after the Holy Wedding Ceremony, my husband and I visited Ju-an Farm in Incheon, not far from the border with North Korea, with several members. We planted grapevines and ginkgo and zelkova trees. As I planted a young sapling, I offered a prayer: "May you grow well and become a big, strong tree that will bear the fruit of hope for the people of the world." I was not praying only for that particular tree, but for success in the mission given to my husband and me. As a tree provides people with fruit as well as shade, so should we and all people of faith.

From the outset, high waves and strong winds battered the small boat of our newly married life. Fortunately, I was prepared for that. It is said that newlyweds know nothing but happiness, but that was not our main purpose. My husband and I were not in a position to focus very much on our personal contentment.

Our first living space was a small, sparsely decorated room at the back of Cheongpa-dong Church. On one side, it connected to the chapel, and on the other to the tiniest of courtyards. Our kitchen was small and old

fashioned, with a rough cement floor. I cooked for my husband in that kitchen, which was always smoke-filled from coal briquettes. From the first day I prepared his meal, I was quite at home in that kitchen, which was similar to many my little family had occupied. I was quite deft with the cutting knife, even though my hands were cold. When people saw me preparing the various dishes without much trouble, they were surprised. Until a few weeks prior they had thought of me as only a teenage nursing student.

The church was always crowded with members, and my husband and I seldom spent time by ourselves. In such a public setting, Father Moon and I would sit across from each other and talk about our plans for the world. Members would show concern and say to us, "Please, you really should eat now." We would look at the clock and often see it was 2:00 or 3:00 in the afternoon, and we hadn't given a thought to lunch. I focused on the many tasks that would be entrusted to me in the future. I realized that not only Korea but also the rest of the world was expecting me to extend my helping hand.

Beginning with our first daughter, Ye-jin, I gave birth to children one after another. The church headquarters that served also as our home was a small and poorly insulated Japanese-style house, and I suffered postpartum ailments as a result of delivering babies there. I was young but, as women have done from time immemorial, I quietly endured the pain of childbirth. Within my heart, Heavenly Parent was present at every moment. No matter how difficult the situation and surroundings, I was filled with joy. Never for a moment did I lack the helping hand of God, working His miracles in the background.

Within a few years, our small quarters were filled to bursting with our many children. Perhaps that is why they grew up loving and caring for one another. I considered them to be miniature expressions of God. I would kiss their cheeks and chat affectionately with them, and I prayed for them ceaselessly. I knew that God comes to dwell in the home where parents and children are harmonious.

Even before our wedding, with God's providence at the forefront of my mind, I resolved to have 13 children. Today people look at you askance if you have many children, but I saw that God wanted 12, to signify the perfection of east, west, north, and south. When you add one, corresponding to the central position, you get 13, which opens the way for the continued development of the providence to its ultimate conclusion.

God's dispensation for the salvation of humankind is not something that happens in one generation. To carry it out, God has sought out and established central people throughout history. Two thousand years ago, how did God send Jesus, His only begotten Son without original sin, to this earth through the people of Israel? The Bible records that God had to restore a pure lineage in several stages. There are unresolved issues connected to this lineage that I must set straight during my lifetime, and so I set to recover and rightly establish the lineage of goodness centered on Heaven. In order to give rebirth and resurrection to this complicated lineage and thus transform it into the true lineage whose center is God, I willingly took the risks that come with pregnancy and childbirth, including managing the birthing pains that put a woman's life in God's hands.

I gave birth to 14 children over a period of 20 years. The first four were born in our small private quarters at Cheongpa-dong. It was not until my fifth child that I was able to go to a hospital. Though it taxed my body, I gave birth to children year after year. Our second daughter died a few days after her birth. Our final four were delivered by Cesarean section. It is rare for a woman to go through a C-section more than once. When I said that I would undergo it for the third time, my doctor hesitated, saying it was dangerous, especially for a woman of my age. The doctor did not understand how I could insist so calmly on having another C-section, and he wanted to explain the issues to my husband. I assured him that my husband would agree with me, and I went through it for a third and then a fourth time, thus fulfilling the promise I had made to God.

* * *

My husband, being a charismatic spiritual leader, sometimes received unwanted attention from women. There was once a woman who appeared in front of him claiming to be Eve, and another who hid under his bed. As God's true son, and as a true husband and father, he never wavered. He, and I as well, felt only sympathy for such women.

I encountered similar advances. Once, while my husband was away on a world tour, a strange person shouted loudly, "I am Adam," jumped in front of me and tried to assault me. At the time I was seven months pregnant, and I was so shocked that I almost miscarried. I encountered the same forms of hardship that Father Moon did. At times my reality turned into a whirlpool of tests and ordeals, and in my heart I would feel like a little boat floating on rough seas.

Knowing well my mission, I overcame those hardships through prayer. My silent perseverance and constant prayer actually deepened the members' devotional life. I always strove to maintain a generous heart, and my unwavering faith as a young person encouraged those around me. The greater my absolute obedience to and reverence for God, the more hope everyone felt. Sometimes my elders would hold my hand and whisper into my ear, "Thank you so much for the grace you have shown us through your sacrificial love."

Victory through perseverance

"Oh, no, I've lost another pair of shoes." Even before the member would finish his sentence, those around him would know what had happened. Poverty sometimes makes people do bad things. At the end of Sunday services, we often would find that a pair or two of shoes were missing from the shoe rack. So, whenever I had a little extra money, I would buy new shoes for members who had lost them. I also prayed that the person who had taken the shoes would set his or her life straight.

Between 200 and 300 people would attend our services and other events, and there was never enough rice to serve them all. So we made porridge by boiling barley in a large iron pot. As the event progressed inside the church, outside we would make a wood fire and cook the barley porridge. Members would sit down in little clusters and share bowls of the porridge, and they were more grateful for this than anything else. "All of this is a gift from God," they would say.

When I was pregnant I craved tangerines, but we could not afford them; they were so expensive. One member learned about this, however, and bought some tangerines for me. I ate six or seven of them on the spot. I was so grateful, I cried.

When a church holy day would approach, I felt more anxious than excited or happy. I would have to start making preparations two weeks in advance to organize the deliveries of the offering table towers of fruit and delicacies, banners, flowers and candles, hoping that there would be enough for each member to have an apple or a candy. Once we had made this offering to God, I would feel immense satisfaction.

From my birth until my marriage, my path had not been easy, and after marrying, personal challenges impacted not just me but also our movement. So I never deviated from the path of faith, obedience, and love for God. Just as Satan tested Jesus and Father Moon, he tested me. I persevered through those ordeals with ever-deepening devotion because it was at such times that I felt most keenly the grace of God. In the midst of pain, God came very close to me and guided me with pillars of cloud and fire.

My husband and I always conversed intensely on various matters. We could do so out of our infinite trust in each other. We went through so much together that we could understand each other with only a look. The life of Father Moon and the path I have walked bear an uncanny resemblance. Most people assumed that I was so happy and that I wanted for nothing. "You received the seal from God as His only begotten Daughter," they would think, "and you were born as a perfected being. Therefore, you attained your position with no effort." Many people were like this. They believed that as the Mother of the universe I blissfully had met Father Moon, formed a happy family and enjoyed life. That describes my life from one perspective, but I have scaled mountains as treacherous and impassable as any in this world. I was able to surmount them all with my husband's love, which was more than any wife has ever received.

Although I had 14 children, I never once thought that I had too many. Nonetheless, my children had to go through difficult experiences. When they went out to play, local people would glare at them. "Your father is Sun Myung Moon, isn't he?" adults would shout at an innocent five-year-old. "Do you know what your father does? The Unification Church is creating such a disturbance in the world!" While in Korea they were criticized for being the sons and daughters of Sun Myung Moon, and when we moved to the United States, they faced discrimination for being Asian. It pained me to see my children suffer, but I did not lament or blame others. I held them in my arms and set an example for them by offering prayers of gratitude.

My husband and I cared for our children with love and devotion, but because we had so much work to do for the church and the providence, we were unable to spend much time with them. One day, when my husband was on his world tour, Hyo-jin, barely three years old, sat on the bedroom floor and began to draw. Normally he liked to draw cars or bikes, but that day he clumsily drew a face on the white paper. Even though I knew that it was his father, I asked him, "Hyo-jin, who is that?"

Hyo-jin did not answer me, but drew a face on another piece of paper. Though it looked different from the first one, it was still without a doubt his father's face. Hyo-jin was usually very active, but on that day he sat quietly and continued to draw. He did not grow tired of drawing his father's face, even after spending the whole day at it. And he did not stop drawing it the next day or the day after. It was only when his father returned that he stopped drawing. I can still remember quite vividly how brightly he smiled at his father as he was embraced by him. It was as if he had been given the world.

Seven sons and seven daughters

True Father and I offered three generations as a True Family to God, culminating when we with all of our children, their spouses and our adult grandchildren, taught God's word and ministered the Blessing in 180 nations, in what we call the Jubilee Years, 2006-07. I risked my life to bring our children into the world, and now they have their own missions and responsibilities that Heaven wishes them to fulfill, and that I also hope they can accomplish. Although, as their parent, I may be unable to help them enough, I pray for them every day.

If I had experienced only joyful things, I never would have been able to look into people's deepest, innermost hearts. I never would have known the joys of the kingdom of heaven. I have passed through the bottom of hell and experienced every kind of bitterness in life. God wanted me to train myself. What I

needed was untiring faith, strong will and perseverance. That is how I reached this point today.

No matter who you are, you will not experience only sweetness and joy on the path to the kingdom of heaven. Going through spiritual struggle is, in fact, a most precious blessing. Through it you can feel the grace of God. Only when you pass those tests can you be born anew as a true human being. The fruit of perseverance will grow and ripen within you, and one day will become the source of your deepest pride.

* * *

I grew up in a time of global turbulence, from which my homeland of Korea was not exempt. As our people endured Imperial Japan's colonial rule and the Korean War, a wild rush of confused ideas and values wreaked havoc on our traditions. The people of the world, even the Christian nations, struggled as their societies descended into chaos. Where were we to turn?

When there was no institution to depend on and no shelter to protect my heart, I remembered one thing: "God is my Father." I grew up holding the belief that I would realize the dream and hope of God. Convinced that within my lifetime I would complete the long, sorrowful providential journey to restore God's original ideal for His children, I retained my faith, no matter what happened.

It was with this heart that I decided to receive the Blessing in marriage with Sun Myung Moon and, with him, work to prevent religious conflicts and factions from continuing beyond my generation. Conflicts caused by religious divisions must now stop. I am also determined to resolve racial divisions and the conflicts that have arisen from them.

* * *

In 1982 I accomplished one of my promises to Heaven. In the two decades after our Holy Wedding, I bore 14 children, seven sons and seven daughters. When they were just days old, my husband and I offered each child to God and the world. Each has supported us heroically in their own way and each is now pioneering their own course. They have given us more than 40 grandchildren.

Now I am always on the move, traveling the five seas and six continents, working to establish a world without war and conflict, and to release God from His sorrow.