

What I Learned about Peace While Being Carried on My Father's Back

Sun Myung Moon

March 1, 2009

As a Peace-Loving Global Citizen



Photo date and location unknown

I have lived my life with just one thought. I wanted to bring about a world of peace, a world where there are no wars, and where all humankind lives in love. Perhaps some may say, "How is it possible that you were thinking about peace even when you were a child?" Is it so astonishing that a child would dream of a peaceful world?

In 1920, when I was born, Korea was under forced occupation by Japan. Even after liberation in 1945, there came the Korean War, the Asian financial crisis, and numerous other difficult crises. For many years, the land of Korea has not been closely associated with peace. But these times of suffering and confusion were not matters related only to Korea. The two world wars, the Vietnam War and the wars in the Middle East show that people in the world continuously treat each other with enmity, pointing guns at each other, and bombing each other. Perhaps, for people who experience these horrors of bloodied bodies and broken bones, peace has been something that could be imagined only in a dream. Peace, though, is not so difficult to accomplish. To begin with, we can find peace in the air we breathe, in the natural environment, and in the people around us.

The truth of the universe is that we must acknowledge each other and help each other. Even the smallest animals know this. Cats and dogs do not get along, but if you raise them in the same household, they

embrace each other's offspring and are friendly toward each other. We see the same thing in plants. The vine that winds its way up a tree depends on the trunk to support it. The tree, however, does not say, "Hey, what do you think you're doing, winding your way up my trunk?" The principle of the universe is for everyone to live together, for the sake of one another. Anyone who deviates from this principle faces certain ruin. If nationalities and religions continue to attack each other, maliciously, humanity has no future. There will be an endless cycle of terror and warfare until one day we become extinct. But we are not without hope. Clearly there is hope.

I have lived my life without ever letting go of that hope and always kept alive the dream of peace. What I want is to wipe away completely the walls and fences that divide the world in myriad ways and to create a world of unity. I want to tear down the walls between religions and between races and fill in the gap between the rich and the poor. Once that is done, we can re-establish the world of peace that God created in the beginning. I am talking about a world where no one goes hungry and no one sheds tears. To heal a world where there is no hope, and which is lacking in love, we need to go back to the pure hearts that we had as children. To shed our desire to possess ever-increasing amounts of material wealth and restore our beautiful essence as human beings, we need to go back to the principles of peace and the breath of love that we learned as we were being carried on our fathers' backs.

As a child, I thought of the meadows as my home. As soon as I could wolf down my bowl of rice for breakfast, I would run out of the house and spend the entire day in the hills and streams. I could spend the day wandering about the forest with all different birds and animals, eating herbs and wild berries, and I would never feel hungry. Even as a child, I knew that my mind and body were at ease anytime I went into the forest.

I would often fall asleep in the hills after playing there. My father would be forced to come find me. When I heard my father shouting in the distance, "Yong Myung! Yong Myung!" I couldn't help but smile, even as I slept. My name as a child was Yong Myung. The sound of his voice would awaken me, but I pretend to still be asleep. He would hoist me onto his back and carry me home. That feeling I had as he carried me down the hill -- feeling completely secure and able to let my heart be completely at ease -- that was peace. That is how I learned about peace, while being carried on my father's back.