

The Seonghwa Ceremony

Sun Myung Moon

Quotes from February 25, 1985 to November 11, 2011

Cheon Seong Gyeong, Book 11, Chapter 3, Section 2



Because Unification Church members know that there is a spirit world, they are not afraid of dying. In the Unification Church, a funeral is called a Seunghwa Ceremony. It means to ascend nobly to heaven. The Seunghwa Ceremony is about ascension.

To inaugurate it, I had to rejoice more over the death of my son than I did at the birth of my sons and daughters. I had to experience the joy that God would have felt had his princes and princesses been born to him. If this did not come to pass, my son could not have crossed over the hill of death. At the place where he died, we, his mother and father, had to offer a prayer to celebrate the victory of love, that is, of his having achieved liberation. That is why, when Heung Jin passed on, I did not shed even a single teardrop. Because he had a long way to go in the next world, I held the Unification Ceremony for him.



The Seunghwa Ceremony and the Seonghwa Ceremony

There is a three-year course that had to be established during the forty-year period of the restoration of Canaan on the world level. Through this three-year course we needed to reach the conclusion. The second year was the most dangerous. It was the most difficult time. That is why, at that time, Heung Jin passed on, and I went to prison. As the leader who had been shouldering responsibility for heaven and earth, I was very serious. Satan was the one who caused what happened to Heung Jin. Therefore, I first conducted the unification ceremony, then the Seunghwa Ceremony, and then, because I had to send him off as my victorious son, I did not shed any tears until Heung Jin passed on. This is a dreamlike story. However, in this world, things are actually happening just as I prayed and just as I said.

Unbelievable events are taking place. When Heung Jin went to the spirit world, I held the Unification Ceremony and declared the Day of Victory of Love. The love of True Parents treads on Satan's world and overcomes death. That is why, as I viewed Heung Jin during the three days before his passing, I could not shed any tears. Even in the presence of our dead sons and daughters, we should be able to share God's love and dedicate our love to them. For this reason, I declared the Day of Victory of Love. Because love triumphed over everything, the ceremony is called the "Seunghwa Ceremony."

In the Unification Church, we call a funeral the "Seunghwa Ceremony." Our birth, the Holy Wedding Ceremony and even the end of our life are to be offered to God. The complete fruit of these is the Seunghwa Ceremony. However, you have no idea what an embarrassment it is for a person to be given a

Seunghwa Ceremony and honored with many flowers if they lived a careless life and did as they pleased. Therefore, knowing the Principle, we should lay our foundation by living in accordance with it.

Though Heung Jin passed on alone, I blessed him on earth on the fiftieth day after his passing -- just as on the Pentecost fifty days after the passing of Jesus, the one hundred and twenty believers who had gathered in the Upper Room were filled with the Holy Spirit, as recorded in the Book of Acts (2:1-4). With that, I made up for all the incomplete work that Heungjin would have done during his lifetime.



True Mother bowing at True Father's casket and portrait during his Universal Seunghwa Ceremony

I could not shed tears as I sent him off. I also made Mother pledge not to express sadness in front of Heung Jin when he departed for the spirit world. If I had not prepared the way for him at the time, he would have gone to the spirit world in tragedy, like other people. He would then have had no relationship with Jesus or the world of the Blessing amid a spirit world rife with divisions. That is why I named his departure the "Seunghwa Ceremony." That ceremony I conducted was the original Seunghwa Ceremony.

At Heung Jin's Seunghwa Ceremony, no one was allowed to shed tears. This was especially so for True Parents. Later, in the United States, only after they received the report from Korea that the Seunghwa Ceremony had been performed joyously, did they shed tears of blessing as they bid him farewell. In this way, the history that had been divided in tears was brought together in harmony with tears. Therefore, no one should shed tears during a Unification Church Seunghwa Ceremony. If tears are shed, the deceased cannot go the way he or she is supposed to go.

There is no hope without a heart of love. You cannot form bonds with others if you do not have a loving and caring heart. You should even embrace death itself; otherwise you cannot form a relationship with God, who governs the world beyond death. Without transcending death, you cannot enter God's world of love. You need to rise above the fallen realm; otherwise you cannot find love no matter how eagerly God awaits your arrival. Where there is hope, there is love. To have hope for the spirit world, you need to love, which will enable you to overcome even death. That is why in the Unification Church, a funeral is called a Seunghwa Ceremony. It signifies breaking through Satan's wall straightaway and ascending to heaven.

Throughout your life, you should have nothing to be ashamed of before your wife or husband. You should be able to say, "I have kept true to the tradition of safeguarding God's pure lineage, in order to bequeath it to my descendants. I have lived my life according to the tradition of building the kingdom of heaven, where God desires purity, and now I am departing. I am coming to you, my Father, and I entrust myself to you." With that, the commemoration of your death will be called a Seunghwa Ceremony.

People do not know what it means to die. They think it is a sorrowful occasion, but it is not. Death is a transition from a lower-dimensional world to a higher-dimensional world by crossing the bridge of love. That is why the Unification Church calls death "seunghwa." To die is to ascend to a higher dimension. It is possible only through love.

A funeral in the Unification Church is called a Seunghwa Ceremony. Since it is a ceremony of seunghwa (ascension), you should not hold on to the deceased and cry. When the spirit of the dead person sees you

cry over him or her, that spirit will lament. He or she will say, "The people's ignorance is a rope that ties me down and prevents me from going on my way." Since we know these things, we in the Unification Church call it a Seunghwa Ceremony. "Seunghwa" means "soaring gloriously to heaven." With the power of love, you should lift the deceased up.

Instead of pulling the dead person down, you should lift him or her up. The Seunghwa Ceremony began with Heung Jin. The meaning of "victory of love" in the Day of Victory of Love is being victorious over death through love. Other people's mothers would be overwhelmed with sorrow, writhing and wailing with deep emotion, but Mother was required not to shed tears. We needed to hold his ceremony within three days of his passing. We had to proclaim victory over death. It is on this basis that we can hold the Seunghwa Ceremony in the Unification Church. It is a ceremony of going beyond death and onward to joy. Those who go through the Seunghwa Ceremony can easily cross over all the valleys in the spirit world.



World Peace Center at the Universal Seunghwa Ceremony for Sun Myung Moon, the True Parent of Heaven, Earth and Humankind on September 15, 2012

The word "death" is sacred. It is not a word that should evoke sadness and anguish. That is why I announced that I changed "*seunghwa*" to "*seonghwa*".

The character "*seong*" (聖) means to be sacred or holy. We should no longer use "*seung*" (昇), meaning "to ascend." "Seonghwa" is a term I coined. The previous word, "seung-hwa," did not clearly reflect the sacredness of death, so I rectified it and announced that it is now "seonghwa." The moment of entry into the spirit world is the time when you enter the world of ecstasy and victory. It is the moment, after your life on earth has bloomed and borne fruit, when you embrace the fruit of your life. It is a moment that comes only once. That is why you should rejoice in that moment. In that moment, others should congratulate you as much as they desire and then send you off. In that moment, they should shed tears of joy, not tears of sadness. Every person has eternal life. Compared to the span of eternity, the period of three days after death is shorter than a second. So the question is, "Why should you feel sad about it?" If you lament during that time, your prospects for eternal life will vanish. How dreadful is that? It is so true. It is a time when people should shed tears of joy, not tears of sadness. This "seonghwa" refers to laying out the body of the deceased for three days and offering devotions for his or her passage into the spirit world. I have changed the term, "Seunghwa Ceremony" to "Seonghwa Ceremony."

The Wonjeon Ceremony

Members of the Unification Church overcome fear of the spirit world. I have no fear of death. The Fall brought about death, so religion should create the realm of resurrection. Based on the Day of Victory of Love, we could begin holding the seunghwa (ascension) ceremony. Also on that condition, we could call the burial site the "wonjeon," which means "original palace." It is not about dying but about direct passage to the kingdom of heaven. This palace is a link from the earthly nation to the heavenly nation. That is the meaning of "wonjeon." There is no religion in the world with anything like it other than the Unification Church.

The place of burial for deceased members of the Unification Church will be known as a "wonjeon." To enter the wonjeon means to find our way to the original palace within our mother's womb. Where is your wonjeon? It is the inside of your mother's womb before you were born. From the moment your father's sperm met your mother's ovum, although one was small and the other large, they breathed together, clung to each other and lived in joy. They dwelt together, holding on to each other and giving each other a boost. You need to pass through the ideal of that wonjeon. In the word "wonjeon," the character "jeon" (殿) means "house." It is the same character as the "jeon" in "goongjeon," meaning "palace." You are to find your way to the origin within God's ideal, which existed before your mother's ovum met your father's sperm and you were born on earth.



Do you know what a mortuary table is? When a person dies, before the body is placed in a coffin, it is washed clean and prepared. Before the body can be moved into a coffin, it is placed on the table and washed clean. Unless someone can unite in heart with the deceased at that place, the body cannot be placed in the coffin. Who is supposed to carry out this task? It should be done by the person who loved the deceased the most. The garments for the deceased should be prepared with care in advance, and the deceased should be dressed in them before being sent off. The cerements are the garments that the body is dressed in when it is placed in the coffin. A representative, loyal friend, or a filial son or daughter should receive the fabric for the cerements and sew them. If the deceased is to go to the kingdom of heaven, to a good place in the spirit world, he or she should have upheld the tradition of a loyal patriot and loyal subject. A Korean funeral has this type of meaning. The place where the Unification Church buries its dead is not called a "graveyard" but a "wonjeon." To liberate heaven and earth, we should desire to be buried in such a place. The wonjeon refers to the original palace. It is not a place where just anyone can be buried. Only those who have been martyred or whose life was on a comparable level can be buried there.

