

The Significance and History of the Unification Church Holy Wedding Blessing Ceremony

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God created Adam and Eve as the ancestors of mankind, and blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful, and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion ..."

Had these blessings been realized, Adam and Eve would have become the True Parents of mankind and their children would have received the complete love of God. On the basis of families thus embracing the love of parents, children and of husband and wife, this world would have become an ideal world of peace and true love, centered upon God. But Adam and Eve fell and became false parents, initiating a world of sinfulness.

The central purpose of God's providence of salvation is to send the True Parents, as the Messiah, to redeem the sinful world by restoring the three great blessings which have been lost. Fallen man may thus hope to receive the Blessing in marriage from the Messiah, who comes as the True Parent,

and on that foundation become a true person and establish an ideal family.

The Unification Church Holy Wedding is the celebration of receiving just such a Blessing from God, centering on the ideal of True Love. It is the beginning point in the process of becoming true husbands and wives, and in establishing God's ideal, the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and in the eternal hereafter.

A History of the Blessing

The International Holy Wedding (the Blessing) is the Ceremony through which couples receive the eternal blessing of God and all humanity, and set out on the pilgrimage to becoming the ideal families of the future. Receiving the Blessing signifies a couple's desire to make effort to live morally upright lives in the midst of a decadent world, to show the world a model of ethical living, and to point the way toward the ideal family, society, nation and world based on true love.

Following is a summary of the history of the Holy Wedding ceremonies that preceded the most recent ceremony for 30,000 couples.

The 3 Couple Blessing

On April 16, 1960, the fifth day following Reverend and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon's own Holy Wedding Ceremony, the Three Couple Blessing was held at the Old Headquarters Church, Seoul, beginning at 10 o'clock in the morning. The three couples chosen to participate in this ceremony were Won Pil Kim and Dal Ok Chung; Hyo Won Eu and Kil Cha Sa; and Young Whi Kim and Dae Hwa Chung.

The 33 Couple Blessing

At 4:30 a.m. on May 15, 1961, at the Old Headquarters Church, located at 71-3, Chungpa Dong I-Ga, Reverend and Mrs. Moon officiated at a Wedding for thirty-three couples. The couples were divided into

three groups, and were blessed in three successive ceremonies. Mr. Kwang Yol Yoo, Cultural Director of the Church, was the Master of Ceremonies.



The 72 Couple Blessing

This Holy Wedding was held on June 4, 1962, beginning at 6:20 a.m., at the Old Headquarters Church. Couples entered the hall in sets of three, and separate ceremonies were held for each set. As the couples entered, a congratulatory poem and song were offered, wedding vows were recited and rings were exchanged. Reverend and Mrs. Moon's blessing prayer followed, and finally, commemorative photographs were taken. A one hour intermission was held after eight sets of couples had participated in the ceremony. The entire marriage ceremony was completed at 5:30 p.m., more than eleven hours after it had begun.

The 124 Couple Blessing

This ceremony was held on July 24, 1963, from 10:20 a.m., at Seoul Municipal Hall, located where the Sejong Cultural Center is today. Some 3,500 guests attended. This was the first Blessing for which a formal Blessing Preparatory Committee was set up to make the necessary arrangements. Also, the use of Holy Water was introduced in order to facilitate ceremonies involving large numbers of couples. The Director of the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction, and the Minister of Social Welfare were among the dignitaries who gave congratulatory speeches. The brides and grooms, as well as their parents and other invited guests, wore white to symbolize the tradition of the Korean people as the "people of white clothing."

The 430 Couple Blessing

The Blessing of 436 couples was held on February 22, 1968, at 2 p.m. Reverend Yo Han Lee, the Master of Ceremonies, opened the ceremony. Unification Church President Mr. Eu Hyo-won gave the opening remarks, which were followed by the entry of the ceremonial attendants. Reverend and Mrs. Moon then entered the hall, followed by the brides and grooms. The recitation of the marriage vows was followed by Reverend Moon's blessing prayer and the exchange of rings. Reverend Moon declared the couples to be husband and wife, and the couples expressed their gratitude by presenting bouquets of flowers to Reverend and Mrs. Moon. This was followed by a congratulatory poem and song, and the shouting of three cheers of "Mansei." Immediately following the ceremony, the couples boarded 25 tour buses and scores of cars for a parade around the city of Seoul.

The 43 Couple Blessing

This Blessing was held in three separate stages in 1969. The first stage, on February 28, was a Blessing of 13 couples in Washington Church, USA. On March 28, at Essen in Germany, 8 couples were blessed, and on May 1st, 22 couples received the blessing in Tokyo, Japan - a total of 43 couples.

The 777 Couple International Blessing

On October 21, 1970, at 10:30 a.m., at Seoul Changchoong Gymnasium, with a full house of some 15,000 people, 790 couples from ten countries received the Holy Blessing. There were 539 couples from Korea, 235 couples from Japan and 16 couples from the United States and Europe.



The 1800 Couple International Blessing

Unification Church members from 25 nations participated in this ceremony, held on February 8, 1975, at 10 a.m., at the Changchoong Gymnasium. The order of ceremony was identical to that of previous ceremonies.

The 74 Couple Blessing in New York

Brides and grooms from eleven countries gathered for this ceremony held on February 21, 1977, at 3 p.m., at the New Yorker Hotel, New York. The ceremony was opened by missionary Pak Bo-hi, the Master of Ceremonies. The ceremonial attendants entered the hall, followed by Reverend and Mrs. Moon. The brides and grooms then entered and were sprinkled with Holy Water. Mr. Pak spoke on the significance of the Blessing. The recitation of the marriage vows by the brides and grooms followed, and Reverend and Mrs. Moon offered the blessing prayer. After the exchange of rings and the declaration of marriage, the brides and grooms presented bouquets of flowers to Reverend and Mrs. Moon, and all in attendance gave three cheers of "Mansei." Reverend and Mrs. Moon left the hall, followed by the brides and grooms and the ceremonial attendants.

The 118 Couple Blessing in London

This ceremony was held on May 21, 1978, at 10 a.m., at the British Headquarters Church in London.

The 2100 Couple Blessing in New York

Held on July 1, 1982 at Madison Square Garden, New York, 2075 couples from 48 countries participated in this ceremony. The theme of this Blessing was "The Unification Church Works to Achieve World Peace Through Ideal Families."

The 6000 Couple International Blessing

This ceremony was held on October 14, 1982, at 10:30 a.m., at the Chamshil Gymnasium in Seoul. Participants came from 85 countries. Missionary Pak Bo-hi was Master of Ceremonies. This Blessing, held under the theme: "World Peace through Ideal Families," lasted for three and a half hours.

The 6500 Couple International Blessing

Beginning at 10 a.m. on October 30, 1988, this ceremony was held at the company gymnasium of Ilhwa Co. Ltd. in Yongin. Missionary Pak Bo-hi was master of ceremonies. Many of the 6516 couples blessed in this ceremony were international couples, including a large number of Korean-Japanese couples.

The 1275 Couple International Blessing

This ceremony was held on January 12, 1989, beginning at 2 p.m., at the company gymnasium of Ilhwa Co. Ltd. in Yongin. Brides and grooms from 87 countries participated.

The 1267 Couple Already-married Couple Blessing On April 10, 1992, the Founding Rally for the Women's Federation for World Peace was hosted by the Reverend and Mrs. Moon at the Chamshil Main Olympic Stadium. At the commencement of the program, Reverend and Mrs. Moon presided over the marriage Blessing of 1276 couples from 44 nations, witnessed by the huge crowd of invited participants.

The 30,000 Couples International Holy Wedding

At the Seoul Olympic Stadium and in other countries through satellite connection. The Thirty-thousand Couple Wedding, which stood at the center of the World Culture and Sports Festival, was a solemn and profound event, Brides and grooms from around the world pledged to take part in helping to create one human family centered on God's true love. Many different races were represented, but the feeling was of being brothers and sisters under one parent, and of the deep personal significance of determining to become a messenger of true love to the world.



Wedding Vows

- 1) Do you, as mature men and women who are to consummate the ideal of the creation of God, pledge to become an eternal husband and wife?
- 2) Do you pledge to become a true husband and wife, and raise your children to live up to the Will of God, and educate them to become responsible leaders in front of the Unification Family, all mankind, and Almighty God?
- 3) Do you pledge that, centering upon True Parents, you will inherit the tradition of the Unification Family, and pass this proud tradition down to the future generations of the Unification Family and to mankind?
- 4) Do you pledge that, centering upon the ideal of creation, you will inherit the Will of the True Parents, loving the people of the world as God and True Parents do, and ultimately consummate the ideal family which is the building block of the Kingdom of God on earth and in heaven?



Holy Blessing Ceremony in the Era to Open the Gates to the Victory, Liberation and Completion of the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind

Sun Myung Moon:

"I blessed Japanese, Americans and Germans this time. Originally, I wanted to bless some Japanese in 1967, but I couldn't. So I blessed Kuboki as a representative of Japan in the 430 Couples' Blessing in 1969. At first I blessed Japanese, next American, and then I let the anchor of Blessing land with four nations centering upon Germany. Therefore, you should know that a victorious foundation, with representatives of the world's nations setting up indemnity conditions, has been established.

Because I had to establish a world-level foundation, there was an international marriage among 10 different nations after the 430 Couples' Blessing.

The 36 Couples' Blessing was to mark the victory over all the failures of Christian history. It had a mission to revive the central thought of Christianity.

The 72 Couples' Blessing is to bind Cain and Abel in a unified form. The 124 Couples are the representative forms of the world. The 430 Couples were blessed in the very year in which Korea became 4,300 years old. This Blessing established a condition for any Korean who believes in God to go to the Kingdom of Heaven. From that time on, the door of the general age instead of the specific age opened. This taught us that people from all parts of the world are one brotherhood. Father blessed 43 Couples from many nations in the world in 1969; this Blessing had a meaning similar to that of the 430 Couples' Blessing in Korea. The age of international marriage opened after the 430 Couples' Blessing. Through your international marriage, you are to be the families of the world instead of focusing on each other.

The age of the international wedding opened after the 777 Couples' Blessing. There was the 320 Couples' matching ceremony in England; only two percent of the candidates were matched to the same nation (English to English). Young men and women from 27 nations were matched internationally. The mass wedding will be known as the "integration wedding," which is to match people as independent heavenly entities, regardless of nationality, or financial or social background. When the age of opposition to the Unification Church passes, the age of the "integration wedding" will come.

Whoever suffers the most will receive God's blessing. You have the form of an individual but you are not a mere individual. You should live as a representative of God, transcending the individual dimension. A person who lives for the society and the nation is called a loyal subject; and a person who lives for the world and humankind is called a saint. Working for yourself counts for nothing. The result of self-centered action will be fallen and rotten, having no meaning, like the fallen leaves of autumn. A person who works for the whole purpose will be eternally remembered as a champion, a mature fruit in society."