

## Sang Ik Choi, the First Unification Church Missionary - Part 4

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Father with members on Mount Shirouma, Japan July 1, 1967

### **Pre-trial incarceration**

August 31 - It was the 40th day since my incarceration. I decided to fast for four days centered on this day to separate from Satan and prepare for my upcoming trial on 9. 4. I had a feeling that through these 40 days I could separate from Satan and become free. It seemed that fasting in prison might be easy, but it was actually difficult, because in prison mealtimes were the best part of the day. But I had to control my voracious appetite for the food before me. After completing the fast successfully, I gave thanks for spending this time with an unchanging heart, and tried to comfort our father's heart.

The days passed one by one. I couldn't bear thinking that everything was being delayed. I was in a position to be abandoned by heaven if the mission couldn't be fulfilled, where excuses such as, it couldn't be helped, were not allowed. I felt so sorry before heaven and earth, and the only thing that I could do in the current situation was to escape. Each day, my mind was full of that plan and desire. No one would know the thoughts I had. One possibility was to take a momentary chance when we went for a bath, leave the line and go over the wall. But how to get over a wall three times as high as me? Back in my cell, I asked my seniors indirectly for their ideas and wisdom. At times, I felt as if I had escaped indeed, ran through the mountains, and got away successfully.

On the other hand I had the strong faith that God would rescue me through a miracle. I recalled that in ancient times, Peter and Paul were guided by an angel, out of prison.

### **Trial**

September 4 - Following four days of devotion and fasting, I renewed my heart and appeared with confidence at the trial. I didn't want to lose my dignity as a child of God any more. The first trial started at 10:00 am. There were simple questions asked of each defendant, and the next trial was to be held on the 18th. The judge seemed at a glance like a nice person.

September 7 - I was going to maintain my authority as father and child, and never show weakness, not even a weak attitude. Whatever position, environment I would be in, I would try to remember the course that our Lord had gone, and that I would also go as he did. I had a dream that day, that the Lord visited his mother's home for the first time in 50 years. When she heard his voice at the door, she welcomed him

with tears, was in his embrace and attended him with joy and anxiety. The Lord was pleased that for these past 50 years she had been unchanging and firm in resolve, even if he had seemingly abandoned her. It was a dream in which I hoped that my heart would be eternally unchanging before the Lord. I woke up, and prayed quietly.

September 18 - During the hearing on the 18th, the prosecutors asked for a sentence of six months in prison.

### **Sentencing**

October 9 - I was confident to be considered innocent. However, I couldn't hide my anxiety, either from God's viewpoint or from the view of the law. When I left my cell, I said good-bye. All five of us thought we would be deemed innocent and released, but if we were to be sentenced to actual prison time that would be a big problem - the captain, who had a family and children, was worried.

The time for the sentencing came. We believed that at worst, we would get probation. However, that thought was betrayed, and all of us were given six months' imprisonment with credit for having already spent 50 days in detention.

After the ship had departed from Korea, various hardships had come up, but I believed that I'd be released by the final sentence, separate from Satan, and fulfill my mission of restoring the universe for father. I fasted 4 days and prayed, and did my utmost. I believed that father would definitely arrange things in that way. That is why when the sentence came, I couldn't believe it. Yet, it was a fact. It was unexpected, but thinking this was father's providence, I did not doubt anything, and received with happiness the hardship that was handed to me. I thought about father's heart, who had to give this, rather than myself, who had to receive this. On one hand, I was utterly mortified, and had no words of excuse. If giving an excuse and apologizing would take care of it, fallen man's history would not have been extended until today, and human beings would not have had to continue their course of suffering and sorrow. I felt that at least I would try to fight the hardest with wisdom and faith, absolutely not giving any excuses, but still I was sad for this postponement. I resolved that my atonement to the Lord was to at least be grateful for any difficulty and go forward. An unsuspended sentence had been given to me, but I did not waver because of absolute faith. In fact I was so calm that those around me were surprised. I didn't raise an eyebrow, didn't say a word, and started the path of my destiny as a child of God with confidence.

### **Prison life**

My impatient heart was now settled down. I was going to drink this bitter cup. The sentence would end February 17 of next year. I had only to do my best to fulfill this indemnity period. My prisoner number became 84, and I was put in a solitary cell. It was quiet and easier. Those whom you couldn't find a reciprocal base with gave you a headache. I prayed alone in my cell. I was able to pray deeply for the first time in a while; I apologized for drawing things out and making everyone sad, due to my lack of wisdom. I was filled with a new sense of comfort. My absolute faith was [such] that Moses crossed the Red Sea with faith. That Joshua and Caleb destroyed the seven tribes of the Amalekites with faith and courage. I thought about Paul and Peter praying and being rescued out of prison by an angel, and felt that something like that would surely happen to me. I asked myself a question and answered it, that this was prolonged because the time of the father had still not come. But because I believe in final victory, I am unchanging and undefeated. Knowing father's desperate heart and thinking about the Lord's hardships until today, I felt shame that someone like me still lacked ability, and thought about how I could offer devoted service even a day more quickly. As the Lord said, I was to persevere until the end, and had only to gain the final victory. I vowed to have absolute obedience, and stepped into prison life, a battle with Satan.

When I began my prison life, I received a physical inspection. Since my body was weak at the time, the doctor in charge told me that I didn't have to work in the prison and that I could spend the six months before my release in the infirmary. But I asked them to send me to the place where I could do the hardest labor. The doctor looked at me curiously when I asked him to send me somewhere other than the hospital because I'd come to Japan and wanted to work on behalf of Japan. I'd come to the land of Japan to shed blood, sweat, and tears, so how could I just spend my time relaxing?

I'm both a Korean and a Japanese. Since I remembered the Master telling me that being Japanese doesn't mean being born on Japanese soil but rather means loving Japan more than anyone else, I made up my mind that I would become someone who loves Japan even more than the Japanese did and that I would love Japanese culture and the Japanese landscape even more than the Japanese did. So I asked them to send me that very day to the factory where inmates have to carry the heaviest loads, and I spent my time as an inmate with pride. Since the Master said that we had to overcome Satan at the very bottom of Satan's kingdom, I became a son of God who could be loved in Satan's kingdom by working the hardest of all the inmates.