

Sang Ik Choi, the First Unification Church Missionary - Part 13

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Papasan at a meeting with the early members in Japan in 1964

The year is 1959 and Papa-san Choi has escaped from the hospital and taken a train for Tokyo.

I reflected on the past, while making plans for future mission work in Japan. Around noon the next day I would be in Tokyo. I entrusted my fortune to heaven. I had hoped to witness to someone on the train, but there was very old person in front of me, not suitable. A few seats away was a woman who seemed like an intellectual and I thought to speak to her but could not. While I was thinking, the dawn began to break in the eastern skies. The train moved north. I recalled the days, and everyone I knew, when I had previously stayed in Tokyo, wondering if I could meet them, and while deep in thought, the train reached Atami, close to Tokyo, and stopped for a while there. On the other platform, a train for Shinjuku was waiting, so I changed to that train. I feared that my escape had by now been discovered and that a search was already on.

Finally in Tokyo

Past noon, I arrived at Shinjuku station, praying, my heart dancing, but with some anxiety as well. I hadn't been to Tokyo in 7 years, since 1953. I got off the train with nowhere to go to, and decided to visit the Korean YMCA. I walked, my first steps in Tokyo. "Father, Father!" I strengthened my resolve and burned with a fighting spirit.

I got to the YMCA. It was the same as before. It seemed a Korean students' association of young men and women were meeting. I waited until it was over and explained my situation to a young man who appeared to be the leader. I wanted to find a place to stay, and he went to a minister of the organization, Rev. Hwang of the Seiketsu Church. I spoke a little about when I was in Korea. He invited me to dinner in the evening so I stayed. I wanted to see one Rev. Oh and attended the Sunday evening service. I was able to meet him and as it had been seven years there was much to talk about. I said I hoped to stay in Japan for a while and was looking for a place, but the church declined and told me to sleep at the YMCA. Thinking about various things, about tomorrow, I prayed deeply before Father and the Lord, happy that I was safely in Tokyo.

Visiting friends

Day 3 - I stepped out of the YMCA, full of hope. Had breakfast outside, thinking what to do with my plans, my situation. I had to be constantly careful and go about wisely in Satan's world... I had nowhere to go but thought to visit an acquaintance, and last night I'd found out at the YFC, buying a Japanese Bible, that Ms. Imoo was still there, so I called her. We met around noon at a coffee shop on Suzuran Street. It had been seven years. She hadn't changed much. We talked a little and when she asked what brought me to Japan, I said it was to become a resident, but that I was wondering how things would turn out.

She knew where several past employees were, and I visited one of them, Ms. Ozeki. She said she knew where Ms. Tamura lived, so I visited that evening, about ten minutes from Mitaka station. It was good to see former friends, I was comforted and did not feel alone anymore. Ms. Tamura had always been a calm person. She welcomed me the most. There was a young man named Kimura at her home, so I witnessed

to him. He did listen, but was self-centered. He was materialistic, a typical modern man who was becoming like an animal.

It was getting late, so I left. I returned to the YMCA unwillingly, but had nowhere else to go. I was told "Only one night," and it was the third night. The pastor was coldhearted, but I asked for just one more night and stayed. He asked many things about my situation and didn't leave a good impression. I went to sleep thinking this would be the last night here.

Difficulty finding a place

Day 4 - I wanted to resolve this today. I went to Ms. Tamura's. She also asked what brought me to Japan. I thought I should give some answer, so I said I was with a school, a faith-based business organization. I had dinner with her at Kichijoji, and went back to her family's home. Although she agreed to let me stay for a while, her family did not approve.

I had no place to go. If I went to an inn and something happened [with the authorities], all would be in vain. It was getting late, and having no choice, I went to an inn in front of the station. But I didn't have a good feeling, so got on the train to Suidobashi, and stayed at an inn there. I felt tense and was vigilant.

Relying on an acquaintance in Yamanashi

I stayed a few days at the inn. I had to eat and money was dwindling. I was getting anxious. Yet my strong faith didn't waver and I strove to overcome. I decided to visit one Mr. Iwashita, a former colleague who was now a pastor in Yamanashi prefecture. It was unbearable to have reached Tokyo, and then go out to the Yamanashi countryside.

I arrived in the late afternoon. There was an evening service that night, with 5-6 participants at the church which had been there for decades. Mr. Iwashita gave a sermon, and externally he seemed stable. I felt a little better, and decided to go to sleep.

His parents lived with him and I wished to have some freedom so I went to his church with him. It was a nice, quiet place. I said I'd like to stay here on my own and eat by myself. I felt more at peace. There was a small 4-mat room in the back of the church where I hoped to stay until I planned the next move.

As I had time on my hands, I started translating Wolli Haeseol [Explanation of Divine Principle] into Japanese. I worked on the remainder of what I'd started at the sanatorium. Although it was hard to stay in the room day after day, I couldn't be found walking around a small town too much either. Gradually, I began to feel confined. I looked forward to letters from Tokyo and Korea.

In about two weeks, a letter came from Korea; our trinity was trying to find money but things were difficult.

Unexpectedly, I got a letter from the address of Mrs. Ito, with whom I had visited Japan together about seven years previously. It was Godsent and feeling I should visit right away, I greeted Mr. Iwashita and went to Tokyo. I was hopeful again.

I met Mrs. Ito in Tokyo. She greeted me kindly. I also saw Mr. Tsuruichi, who had always been a likeable man. Later, Ms. Keiko came in a kimono, but perhaps I'd said some extreme things, and she seemed to be on her guard. I stayed the night there, and visited Ms. Tamura the next day. She'd actually found a place and was just about to send me a letter about it; I planned to go see the place immediately.

In the evening, I returned to the Itos, but she felt distant. Satan was trying to speak through her to have me return to Korea, using materialistic reasoning. Yet, I couldn't complain or alter my will.

Renting an 8-mat room

I decided on a place the next day in Higashi-fushimi, an 8-mat room to myself. I paid half the rent and returned to Mrs. Ito, who scolded me, but I stood my ground. I said I'd found a place and left in the morning. She gave me some money and I accepted it. I did not miss her place; in fact it was a daily spiritual battle there. They didn't understand me from a heavenly perspective, but treated me like a bad man or a patient. This was also probably an indemnity course.

Ms. Tamura and I bought bedding in installments, packed it on a bicycle and I moved in the afternoon. I felt so anxious, as if everyone was watching me. This was because I had no legal freedom. But the mission of restoring the cosmos had to be fulfilled, and I would go forward today, and tomorrow. I slept in the large room alone.

After spending a lonely night like Jacob at the new place, the landlord invited me to a simple meal, so I ate with some reserve. In the afternoons, I witnessed to students at Ochanomizu student hall, visited a church at times, and witnessed with an impatient heart.