

Awaiting God's Blessing

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Kook Jin (August 3) and Sun Jin's (August 4) Birthday in 1982

When my center leader told me in a few words, "Yoshiko! Your blessing will be soon," my heart burst with excitement. I felt just like Cinderella after she had received her prince's proposal. It was in the summer of 1968. I was at the University of Hiroshima, and had been attending Sunday services and church activities without telling my parents. In the kitchen I was waiting for my longtime friend, who was listening to the Divine Principle lectures. My view of the blessing was that only those who were close to the perfection stage could receive it. Therefore, the words of the director came as a complete surprise to me.

Later, when I was listening to the lecture on the advent of the Messiah, I heard a voice like that of an angel: "You have to go through the course of Jesus." It was quite different from the voice of the lecturer. As I had a special interest in the blessing, I felt, "Do I have to be single until I am 33 years old? Well, that's a problem!"

Eleven years later, in May, 1979, I was engaged to an American in New York. I was 33 years old. As I have gone a similar course, not only in age, but also symbolically, I have been thinking of Jesus' life 2,000 years ago. I feel how much regret Jesus felt when he had to leave the earth.

While I was looking forward to the blessing for those eleven years, I went through many trials. They seemed to begin at about the time of the 1800 couples blessing in 1975. In 1974, after Father gave the last Sunday service of the year at Belvedere, he called the unblessed Japanese sisters to the main house. He talked to the twenty women intimately. He spoke to us completely in Japanese about the nature of women and the qualities of an ideal spouse. (Father always speaks Korean with an English translation in public. As Japanese, we did not understand either language well, so to hear him speak in Japanese was very welcome.) Looking at my face, Father told me, "Your eyebrows are like a samurai's. You have a double-edged sword. If you don't pay attention to it, you will cut yourself, too. Only a strong man who can manage you or a quite opposite gentleman can be fit with you. Otherwise you'll have nothing but trouble in your family and your children will not grow." When I recalled the incident later on, his words were a big shock to me. Yet, when I was in front of Father, my heart was so full because he was talking to me. It was such a memorable experience for us to be welcomed by the True Parents as their daughters.

In the next year, as we had news of the upcoming blessing in Korea, we were anxious about it, wondering what would happen to us. When I heard from Mr. Kamiyama in a meeting that Japanese who were in America could not attend the blessing, my face became pale, Mr. Kamiyama saw it at once and gave me courage: "Nomura-san! You don't need to become pale. There will be another chance."

At that time, I was on a PR team, and we were given Father's direct guidance several times. When he

came back to America, he visited our office and asked the blessed wives about their husbands. When he said to us, "Are you not blessed?" looking at five unblessed sisters, I felt a big shock. I said in my heart, "Father! You didn't know about me?!" And after that for at least a month I suffered through the valley of hell. I thought about it with the one-sided view that Father didn't know my situation. Later I heard from members in Japan that at the time of the blessing Father said that he felt sorry for members who were in America. I was awakened from my dream, Then I could understand the reason he had a special meeting with us at the end of the previous year. Since he already knew what would happen, he gave us a special memory to help us overcome the trial.

Through this difficulty I came to the conclusion that I wouldn't receive the blessing because I had been a longtime member but rather because God wished me to receive it. After that, I determined to make a new start. Thinking that the CARP program, which gave me the chance to join the church, was the best for me, I joined CARP.

Despite the fact that I had been in America for six years, I thought that my spouse would naturally be Japanese. But many people around me told me that I could have a good marriage with an American, and I became confused. In September, 1978, those who wanted to be engaged with Japanese spouses were told to go back to Japan within three days. Naturally, I had a plane reservation. But the morning that I was supposed to leave, my leader counselled me that I should first ask God what He wanted of me before thinking of my own marriage. So I remained.

After that, I witnessed with no response, so I felt the thickness of the wall of a foreign culture. I doubted the meaning of my being in America, In April 1979, as I walked across the UCLA campus, I asked God why I had been in America six years. I heard a voice: "Yoshiko! The reason I sent you to America is to prepare you for your future. You were happy to come here. Can you really serve the American people? Can you die for this nation?" Then I realized that God had prepared an American as my spouse. I became so peaceful, as if I had already been given my spouse. That was just three weeks before the engagement.

(If I write about the day of engagement, it will take many pages. So I shall omit it.)

I was particularly concerned with what I could do to help my parents and my fiancé's parents accept our engagement. My parents, my father especially, are fervent Buddhists. It was due to his influence that I felt that my spouse had to be Japanese. As I had expected, after I told him I received a letter asking me to reconsider my marriage. I became very concerned that my ancestors would not be saved if they did not happily accept my mate. I prayed for four months about this. Finally I was given the inspiration to explain the situation to my grandfather and ask him to talk to my parents. I sent a letter to my grandfather and father. In it I wrote that there would be no future for the Japanese if we did not go but into the rest of the world and that they should be proud of their daughter, who was pioneering this. Then my grandfather sent me \$2,000.00, and my mother wrote in a letter: "You have been working so hard in A far country. From now on, please live happily." And my father informed me that they would come to America soon to see my spouse.

Encouraged by my fiancé, I wrote hesitatingly to his parents. After I wrote three letters to them, they invited me to visit them. So I visited his family in Ohio by myself on Thanksgiving. I was tense because I was afraid to go there by myself. But they greeted me with warm hospitality. I had a good first start with them. The news that my parents were coming to America made my fiancé and his parents very happy.

Then we decided to have a wedding ceremony. His parents prepared everything for us: invitations, a hall, etc. Coincidentally, the town where we had the ceremony was also the place where he had earlier escaped from deprogrammers, so this ceremony surprised everyone. He comes from a large Italian family, so the wedding ceremony was very splendid. The chief of police, the fire chief, and the bank president all were in attendance.

As both my spouse and I are Geminis his family told us that we are very similar. Yet, nevertheless, one side is American and Catholic while the other is Japanese and Buddhist. My mother was very impressed that Father had a special sense of mission for arranging marriages, and my fiancé's parents were very thankful that Reverend Moon had done at least one good thing for their son. During the past thirteen years, I believed that God would take care of very negative parents if we would devote ourselves for the nation and world. Yet I had never dreamed that it would be accomplished like this through the blessing.