

Mother of Peace
And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes

A Memoir by Hak Ja Han Moon

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Text Only Version

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Rain and cold wind give way to peace

"Already 60 years have passed," said one of my oldest friends from the early days of the church.

"There is a saying that time is like an arrow," I replied, "and it is so true. The path of the last 60 years has flown straight to the target, filled with difficulties and obstacles together with joy and success."

It was April 2014, and she and I were participating in a ceremony commemorating the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Unification Church. I reflected on the church's original name, which is the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, and its establishment in a tiny, rented house in Bukhak-dong, in the Seongdong district of Seoul on May 1, 1954. Thinking back on days gone by, our early members who had gathered expressed deep gratitude to each other, recalling the decades of hardships we endured, as brothers and sisters in one family.

Despite the dire poverty in which the Unification Church began, the Holy Wedding in 1960 launched a new era. We have grown from a handful of members into a global movement, and we see that the Divine Principle teachings have spread to the ends of the earth. It truly is a miracle.

How did God bring this to pass? The key is the salvation of marriage, the oneness of husband and wife made in the image of God. As God called Father Moon to begin his historical mission as a teenager, God also called Hak Ja Han, a young lady of 17. Nobody could fathom His choosing someone so young. I sensed that I would one day represent all women - God's daughters, the world's mothers. Jesus revealed the heavenly bride as the Holy City coming down from heaven, and I accepted this call with firm resolve and I grew from the position of a heavenly bride to Mother of the universe. By God's hand, this Mother, who prays and longs for God's Blessing for all 7.7 billion people on earth, can now advance peace widely.

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As we entered the summer of 1960, our members undertook 40 days of evangelism throughout the country. We called it the New Mind, New Village, New Love Movement. In all the districts of the entire country, a flame of faith rose up strongly. Some 600 missionaries and local members visited 413 villages and put the word of God into practice in substantial ways. During those 40 days, they cleaned neighborhood pathways, taught the Korean alphabet in village halls by the light of kerosene lamps, assisted farmers and shopkeepers and shared the Principle. The members survived on a daily bowl of powdered mixed grains and overcame fatigue and fierce rejection from people, some of whom called them heretics. They often were lonely, like poplar trees standing alone at the center of a field.

By the hand of God, the greater the people's condemnation, the faster our good results appeared. Soon, high school students and other youth joined the witnessing program, providing even more energy for the rebirth of life and prosperity in local villages. Even a first-year middle school girl participated - such was the enthusiasm of those days in Korea. As we repeated those seasons of enlightenment, education, and service, the Holy Spirit came down. Throughout the cities and towns, families offered their large living rooms to serve as night schools. The alphabet was taught to young people who could not attend school - and to women. From the hidden paths of rural villages, a wave of hope washed through South Korean society, a positive influence for needed social progress.

Then, starting in the mid-1960s, the government also began sponsoring rural enlightenment and literacy programs throughout Korea - the Sae-ma-eul (New Village) Movement. Its officials acted as though we did not exist, but we carried on. In the town of Chungju, members used their bare hands to build classrooms with mud walls for dozens of shoeshine boys. In later days, those actions gathered the momentum for establishing what is now the Sunhak Educational Foundation.

On a nationwide scale, our work sparked young leaders in farming areas to establish agricultural schools that spurred a wave of modernization. Some of these schools were on the cutting edge of a movement to transform our society, combining technical and spiritual advancement. As one might expect, the government's New Village Movement, through its administrative power, appropriated all of this, and since the Unification Church was considered heretical, we were pushed to the side. From both the left and the right, voices continued to condemn us.

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As one might imagine, our church leaders and missionaries experienced many difficult days. With no financial support, they felt fortunate to have even one meal a day; three full meals a day was unheard of. Sometimes, out of concern for the missionaries, middle school students secretly left the lunch boxes that their mothers had prepared for them in front of our missionaries' doors. When the missionaries thought of the students sacrificing their lunches, and were faced with the idea of eating a lunch box that a student had given them, they were inexpressibly miserable. However, their responsibility was to convey the new understanding of truth, and they resolved to honor the sacrifices that had been made to help them.

My husband and I did not just send missionaries to their areas; we visited our local churches throughout the country several times a year. We would bring with us food, clothing and supplies we had gathered. There was never enough, as there were many other service projects and activities to support, but we brought all that we could. When we walked into view, hand in hand, the missionaries in the pioneering areas would greet us in tears. We would uplift and encourage our members and talk together, without realizing we had stayed up all night.

Our members who worked on American military bases would sometimes bring chocolate, bananas or cookies to church. I would put these gifts in a wardrobe or on a shelf and would wrap them and give them to the missionaries when we went out. One missionary sister burst into tears when she received the wrapped bundle. A few months later, she returned for a visit, held my hand tightly and said, "I brought that package to my pioneering area and ate it together with our members. Your encouragement gave us power when we conveyed the words of the Principle." Such words always gave me great joy.

The pioneer centers were hardly what one would call churches. They usually consisted of a single room, and our missionaries often were too poor even to put up a sign. Anyone who entered would immediately wonder if it was really a church. On the one hand the impoverished appearance saddened my heart, but on the other hand, I felt proud of our members and comforted them. "Our church's downtrodden circumstances may seem miserable to ordinary people," I would say softly, "but in the future, we will hoist a flag of victory and receive the love of people the world over."

That is why wherever we went, we were not ashamed. No matter who we met, we were confident. We tried to register our church with the government, and we were rejected several times, as a torrent of opposition flowed from established churches, who sent petitions of protest about us to government officials. Finally, in May 1963 the Korean government registered our organization legally as the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity.

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In 1975 we held mission conferences in Japan, the United States and Germany, from which we selected young missionaries and dispatched them to some 95 new nations in addition to the more than 30 already with active missions. There were many reasons to delay or slow down our evangelical outreach, but we could feel God's urgency and pressed forward. I recall my husband's words, shared late one evening: "There will always be reasons that we cannot send them. But if we do not send them now, we will never send them. There will never be a moment without difficulties. Let us make a firm decision when things seem the most difficult."

That 1975 cohort of faithful men and women represented not one nation, but three: Japan, the United States, and Germany, countries that were enemies during the Second World War. We sent them in groups of three, one Japanese, one American and one German or Austrian. Their unity with each other was the foundation for outreach and service that bore great fruit over the decades.

Unlike many Christian missionaries sent out from the United States and Europe, our international missionaries did not receive continuous financial support from the sending church. They left with enough money to survive for a few weeks, a suitcase of clothes and a Divine Principle book. Instead of living in nice buildings or homes, they stayed in tiny rooms or huts. They had to improvise mission plans and work together despite having different cultural backgrounds and speaking different languages. Faced with so many unknowns, those who were leaving and those who were sending both had to maintain a brave face, knowing each missionary was stepping into an unpredictable future.

Our missionaries committed to a five-year tenure, but more than a few who went to Africa and the Middle East remained for 20 years and more. Once or twice a year, if they could, they would attend a world mission conference at our East Garden facility in New York.

One young missionary arriving at one such conference burst into tears upon seeing my husband and me. It was her first time meeting us. Hearts that wanted to weep in joy and sadness ... how could there be anything but that? The person who wanted to weep the most was me, but I knew if I did so, the happy occasion would turn into an ocean of tears. Therefore, with the heart of a strong mother, I embraced that young woman instead.

The next day, I took all the missionaries out and bought them blouses and scarves or dress shirts and neckties. "This looks good on you," I would say to each of them, adding, "You have worked very hard."

But together with my sincere consolation, I would ask them to be strong and press harder: "If you sacrifice a little more on the way of the will, a peaceful world will come about in our time."

Near the close of these conferences, the missionaries would pledge their new resolve in front of God's will and depart again to the front line of His dispensation. My heart of loving admiration for our leaders and tribal messiahs who have left their homeland for the sake of humanity remains unchanged to this day.

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Whenever we sent missionaries to unfamiliar lands, my husband and I held onto Heaven and prayed earnestly for each one of them. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Unification Movement faced intense opposition the world over. An unknown party even sent a bomb threat to our church's Belvedere Training Center in Tarrytown, New York. But the opposition was particularly intense in communist bloc countries due to our public speeches, rallies and educational programs to defeat Marxism-Leninism. We especially prayed for our missionaries who went into communist countries, as we knew there was the possibility of martyrdom. To our sorrow, that concern became a reality.

In these "Iron Curtain" countries, surveillance, deportation, shadowing and terror were our missionaries' everyday experiences. In 1973 in Czechoslovakia, the police arrested most of the core members. Almost 30 young people received prison sentences of up to nearly five years; others were released but endured ongoing repression. In 1976 in France, unidentified assailants bombed our Villa Aublet Church in Paris, injuring two members. Our French members marched from the Eiffel Tower to the Trocadéro calling for religious liberty and winning the sympathy of many. Finally, when it was revealed that communists were involved in the bombing, prominent leaders, including US congressional members, publicly condemned the attack on religion.

Even worse tragedies occurred. In the flower of her youth, at the age of 24, Marie Živná, one of the most faithful members in Czechoslovakia, died in a cold Bratislava jail cell. In December 1980, in Tanzania, Japanese missionary Masaki Sasamoto was shot and killed, also giving his life as a martyr. Numerous missionaries in the United States and other countries lost their lives while on fundraising drives or in the course of outreach activities.

Despite such tragedies, the missionaries continued their work. In the 1980s, European missionaries working strategically behind the Iron Curtain called their project, "Mission Butterfly." The Butterfly missionaries cautiously witnessed despite the constant danger of being tracked by the secret police and arrested, forced to leave the country, or worse.

In 1987, my husband and I quietly gathered the Butterfly missionaries at our East Garden residence. We listened to their moving stories late into the night. There was no stopping the flow of tears. The missionaries shared, from deep within their hearts, stories that they had been unable to tell even their parents or brothers and sisters. Hearing their stories, we felt deeply concerned about their harsh circumstances.

Because these missionaries were viewed as enemies of the state, staying in their mission country was filled with risks, but this only intensified their prayers and faith in God. As one missionary said to us, "I don't know when or where I will run into some kind of danger. I only know that my life is being directly supervised through God's revelation. If there is a dangerous situation, God appears in my dream and guides me along the path I should go."

As they departed to their posts, putting our short meeting behind, I hugged them one by one and sent them off, waving until they were out of sight. Thinking that these young, pure-hearted missionaries were acting out of their deepest passion for God and True Parents, bound for lands more brutal than battlefields, without as much as a promise as to when we would meet again, my heart ached and my eyes blurred with tears.

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That our missionaries were persecuted for nothing other than faith in the True Parents was truly a sorrowful reality of history, and their determination to advance was truly a glory of history. Chosen members went to every corner of the globe. Despite suffering and danger, they leapt into many kinds of work: organizing service projects, establishing schools, providing vocational training, cultivating the wilderness, building factories, houses and communities - and raising the necessary funds by their own wits and Heaven's assistance.

Each time I saw missionaries off to cross unfamiliar seas and continents, the limitation of what I could give them pained me. I encouraged them by saying that when our dreams are realized, God will give us all the greatest of blessings. Seeing how those words strengthened their resolve, I realized that spiritual encouragement was stronger support than any physical provisions.

In the early stages of the movement, our members were the most pitiful of people: chased and cornered, thrown out of their houses on snowy nights, praying in tears against the outer walls of their own home. Deported from unfamiliar lands, jailed, shot at and even killed while out fundraising, they had to find

their way in the desert with nothing but starlight in the night sky to guide them; these faithful souls pushed their way through dark forests alone to share God's word. Holding our sorrows deep inside, we kept our faith and disseminated our beliefs. Today the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification serves in more than 190 nations, and this activism for peace and true family life grew from the seeds of our missionaries' sacrificial love.

A speaking tour stained with tears

"Mom, you're packing your suitcase again?" I didn't answer my third daughter, Un-jin, right away. My eldest daughter, Ye-jin, who was beside me and had been silently helping me pack, asked, "Mother, where are you going this time?"

That is the first thing my children would ask when they saw me take out a suitcase and start packing. Children wish for their mother to always be near them, playing with them, embracing them. However, bound by church activities, meeting with people and taking frequent trips, I was away from my children more than I was with them. Taking out my suitcase to pack my things signaled to my children that I was at the beginning of another mission far from home.

Although traveling can be enjoyable, when it is a mission, challenges set in from the moment you leave. Even if you stay in a palace, your heart is not at ease, as it is not your home. Furthermore, if you are entrusted with a public mission, each step you take is laden with heavy responsibility.

For a decade after the Holy Wedding in 1960, I was rarely at home, so I was rarely comfortable. I went around the entire country, one day visiting a small village near the demarcation line with North Korea, another day journeying to a remote island village, taking part in events and sharing time with members. My heart was not able to relax for even a single day.

In 1969, crossing the ocean to Japan marked the beginning of my life of international tours. I had a demanding schedule, and as I arrived in each new city, I treated each new land as my own and the people in each country as my brothers and sisters. Nonetheless, I would find time to buy postcards, and at the end of the day, though it was often past midnight, I would write letters to my children, who were wishing I were at home. Here is one of them.

Dear Hyo-jin,

I miss you and want to see you. My son, whom I always call to and think of and run to and hug, my good, cute, precious, beloved son, whom I never want to let go of, I miss you.

So, Hyo-jin, though we are separated for a while, you are one of Heaven's happy sons.

Our filial son, Hyo-jin! Our goodhearted and wise Hyo-jin, I love you. I know you will become a filial son of heaven, a filial son of earth and a filial son of the universe; you will become a good example of a filial child.

Both Appa and Omma feel so sad that we are too busy following the will and have such little time to spend with you. Yet we feel so proud and secure because of you. Hyo-jin, you are different from other children. Even though you run around with your friends, you must remember your origin is God, and not damage His dignity.

Appa and Omma are always proud of you. When we see you in the near future, can you surprise your Appa and Omma a lot? Appa and Omma have a great dream for you. Omma is waiting and always praying for that.

Stay healthy. Goodbye.

The fact that I could not spend much quality time with my children due to my various public responsibilities always weighed on my mind. Despite this, my children were very mature for their age and grew up well. Once my eldest son Hyo-jin was interviewed by a newspaper reporter.

"What do you respect most about your mother?" Hyo-jin answered without hesitation.

"I admire my mother's love and perseverance in embracing my father and making him happy. All mothers in the world are great, but my mother especially absolutely trusts and encourages us. I'm always deeply moved by how she does that. It's really amazing that she gave birth to 14 children even though she's always so busy with global affairs."

Even on the hottest of summer days, I will not get into a cold swimming pool. It's because, as I mentioned, I gave birth to many children, four of them through cesarean sections. When I was giving birth to our sixth son, Young-jin, I was in danger because his head was so large. My husband was in Europe, and I was told it would be dangerous for both mother and baby if we did not act within 30 minutes, so I had no choice but to undergo a cesarean section. Once you've had a cesarean section it becomes difficult to give birth naturally. That being so, I prayed with a desperate heart. During that prayer, the scene of Jesus' crucifixion came to me. I managed the pain with the resolution that, through

the birth of new life, I would overcome the force of death that surrounded Jesus on Calvary.

As it is for all women, my giving birth to a new life was an experience of heaven and hell. I did not find it easy to have four C-sections, yet each time I gave birth I was ready to die for the sake of God and for the sake of a new life.

* * *

In the same way that our house grew lively as we filled it with children, our churches kept springing up in cities and villages, filled with new members. From the outset, however, our goal was not to have the biggest church in Korea. Our goal was to bring salvation to the world, as a true church that would wipe away all of humanity's tears. To accomplish that goal, I went on multiple world tours following the first one in 1969. From the early 90s, I was the keynote speaker. I gave more speeches at more rallies, events, gatherings and seminars that I can count. My footprints are found in almost every corner of the globe, ranging from unfamiliar metropolises to small primitive villages, from deserts scorched by the burning sun to thick jungles and breathtaking highlands. At each place, marginalized peoples, helpless women, children and minority groups were waiting for me. And I anxiously looked forward to seeing them.

I knew I could offer them peace of mind and that every step I took advanced the cause of peace. Knowing this enabled me to return to a room in a different hotel every night, and resume the work at dawn the following day. It was typical for me to enter such a room in an unfamiliar city and sleep in a chair for a few hours, or to close my eyes while leaning back in a waiting room at an airport. Sometimes I came and went from a city without opening my suitcase. My mind was on meeting the people who were waiting for me.

When I spoke in a communist nation for the first time, I sensed the presence of spirit persons outnumbering the living people who received me. While the region was embroiled in war, I went to Croatia. The moment I entered my hotel room, I knew that there were souls that had undergone unjust and miserable deaths, waiting for liberation. To liberate them, I did an all-night prayer vigil.

When I go to Africa, I take antimalarial medication. Once, an incorrect prescription caused me to suffer severe side effects, and I caught malaria, experiencing pain and a high fever. My hectic tour schedule left me no time for treatment. Somehow, along the way, the malaria disappeared.

In the autumn of 1996, I went to Bolivia, where I had an experience I cannot forget. The capital, La Paz, is the highest major city in the world, at an altitude of almost 4,000 meters. Non-natives inevitably suffer from altitude sickness. Scheduled to speak for nearly an hour, I had an oxygen tank beside me at the podium. To make matters worse, the podium started to tip over every time I leaned on it slightly. The only solution was to have a strong young member hold the podium steady while I spoke. People were concerned, but I smiled throughout the speech. I felt nauseous and had a throbbing headache and my legs were trembling but I ignored it all. Under such circumstances, on the verge of collapsing, I kept a stiff upper lip and carried on. The audience was impressed, and people complimented me for my presentation. A local dignitary said, "She really is a person sent by God."

The event was a tremendous success, and at the victory celebration that evening, I warmly held the hands of each participating member individually. Even though I was exhausted, I maintained a high spirit for the sake of the precious guests, VIPs and members who had come from far away to meet me. It turned into a joyous occasion as we encouraged each other. When I returned home, my husband, who listened to all my speeches by phone or, later, through the internet, patted me on the back and expressed his appreciation. "Where else could you get such a blessing," he said, "having such success at a place that is 4,000 meters closer to heaven?"

* * *

Besides bringing the word of God, during my tours I conducted ceremonies to liberate the spirits of those whose lives had been sacrificed. The True Parents' victory upon the earth has opened the gates of resurrection in the spirit world. The members in Austria, in the spring of 2018, carried out such a ceremony. If you follow the Danube River west from Vienna for about two hours, you come to the village of Mauthausen. Amid its beautiful scenery is a visitors' center in front of a depressing and sinister-looking building. That building with its towering walls of thick, gray brick brings on tears of bitter grief, for during the Second World War it was a concentration camp. There, the Nazis incarcerated Jews and many others. Many of the almost 200,000 people that passed through Mauthausen met miserable deaths.

What remains are not relics from 70 years ago. The true pain one feels there is that of the spirit persons who are stuck in that prison, trapped in their resentment. They can resurrect only after the True Parents of healing and hope can console them and alleviate their bitter resentment and sadness.

It happened like this: I had traveled to Vienna to hold the 2018 "Peace Starts With Me" Rally in the Wiener Stadthalle. The event was a great success. Dr. Werner Fasslabend, Austria's former defense minister and a great senior statesman, welcomed me to the podium, and more than 10,000 people heard my message of hope for the future and for a Europe that would live for the sake of others. I was especially encouraged by the bright spirits of the young people who pledged themselves for peace. But the next morning at breakfast, some of our European leaders came to me with serious faces to present a special

request that I permit a ceremony of liberation at Mauthausen. They had heard about my liberation prayers offered for the victims of slavery on Gorée Island in Senegal, and urgently asked me to extend the same heavenly grace to the victims of Nazi persecution.

I sent special representatives to hold a liberation ceremony in Mauthausen. They presented lilies, which represent eternal love, and offered special prayers, opening the gate to alleviate the suffering of those tormented souls. They prayed that those people, now in the spirit world, could release their sadness and resentment and become absolute good spirits who would find their way to the realm of blessing and joy that God has prepared for us all.

It is important to build memorials and educate people about historical wrongs. Still, the higher priority is to release the bitter anguish and anger harbored by those who came before us and who suffered and died unjustly.

* * *

Wherever I go, people who don't know me grasp both my hands tightly, not wanting to let go. Their sorrow upon my departure is deeply engraved in my heart. Many people want to see me, and after we spend time together, they feel an emptiness when I'm gone. This is because we are bound by Heaven. Our original parents broke away from God's embrace 6,000 years ago. The only begotten Son and only begotten Daughter are reconnecting heaven, earth, and humankind and guiding people to live a true life. That is why some people are brought to tears when they meet God's only begotten Daughter.

I have traveled hundreds and thousands of kilometers over the decades to convey God's love. Although my journey has often been very difficult, I have always been happy. My words and footprints will never disappear. Each and every day they will multiply, bearing fruit that will nourish this world and beyond.

Daffodils

"What does 'belvedere' mean?" I asked our first missionary to the United States. "In Italian," she answered, "it means 'beautiful scenery, a magnificent view.'" Dr. Young Oon Kim was a former professor, a Korean woman educated in Methodist theology in Canada who had joined our movement by the guidance of Jesus. Having mobilized American members to raise the necessary funds by selling candles, this devoted missionary prepared this training center for our international movement. Called Belvedere, it is a lovely estate on the Hudson River in Tarrytown, New York. I liked the name as it befits a place where people can deeply experience God's love in a serene environment.

Beginning in 1972, amid Belvedere's beautiful trees and expansive lawns, our American members and guests were taught the Principle through workshops ranging from a two-day weekend to 100 days. My husband gave sermons at 6:00 a.m. every Sunday as well. The training center would often be crowded with young people from all over the world who came to meet my husband and me.

In the early years I planted yellow daffodils at Belvedere and our nearby East Garden residence and conference center. Why daffodils? Daffodils are the harbingers of spring. As the first flowers to pierce through the frozen ground after withstanding the cold of winter, they herald the coming of warmth and new life. I am always amazed at this providence displayed by Mother Nature and by the strength of the sprouts that appear where snow still remains. Roses and lilies that bloom in spring or midsummer are beautiful, but I most appreciate the little daffodil, whose humble, unassuming bloom breaks the spell of the cold winter. Called to be the only begotten Daughter and True Mother, my path is to break through the icy grip of human sin and help bring God's blessing to the world. I often identify with this lovely flower.

* * *

It was a joy to return to Belvedere for a special event in the summer of 2016. It was June 1 and the American members were commemorating the 40th anniversary of the God Bless America rally at Yankee Stadium. That 1976 rally was a monumental event for us. There, my husband proclaimed America's responsibility as the land God prepared to bring the unity of all races, nations and religions through its Christian spirit and foundation.

That God needed to call a Korean movement, the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon and Hak Ja Han, to remind America of its destiny is somewhat ironic. Following God, we sought with all our might to awaken America, which had fallen into chaos and corruption. At that time, Father Moon and I were known only as the founders of an emerging religious movement from the East. I feel today, a half a century later, as I did then - desperate with the hope of giving birth to God's global peace kingdom.

With this heart, I felt so grateful to the families that gathered on that day at Belvedere to celebrate this 40th anniversary. It was a sea of daffodils. They were in their twenties in 1976, and now here they were, with their children and grandchildren. At one point, we sang, "You Are My Sunshine." It is a simple song but one that I will never forget, for to me, and to all gathered on that day, it has deep significance. I was overcome with emotion, silently meditating, reliving the memories that flooded through me.

* * *

The Puritan spirit of seeking God and religious liberty at all costs gave birth to the United States of America. Nonetheless, over time, America permitted a selfish and decadent culture to emerge and displace its original concern for God's will. Traditional Christianity lacked spiritual resources to prevent the rise of sexual immorality and materialism. Arriving here in December 1971, my husband and I, with our members, invested all our strength to resurrect the founding spirit of America and awaken Americans to their God-given responsibilities. God's dream is for all people in the world to live with gratitude in the peaceful, happy realm of God's love. To achieve this, we knew we had to stir up a revolutionary culture of heart. This was the impetus for our Yankee Stadium rally on June 1, 1976.

The year 1976 was the bicentennial of the founding of the United States. As Koreans, citizens of a republic that owed its existence in large part to the United States, we love America. Since 1972, my husband had been speaking emphatically throughout America, saying, "God sent me in the role of a doctor and as a firefighter to save America." We believed that America is a chosen nation, and we declared as our theme for the 1976 rally, "God Bless America." We raised our voices to shout that God needs America to overcome communism and restore family-centered morality.

Throughout April and May of 1976, our worldwide membership prayed for success at Yankee Stadium. Volunteers came to New York from across the United States, as well as from Japan and Europe, to invite people to attend. They reached out tirelessly and enthusiastically. We tried in those two months to awaken a sleeping giant, to revive the democratic world by countering the influence of communism and the culture of drugs and free sex that was destroying the moral fiber of America's young people. We considered the bicentennial a crossroads, an event that would signal whether or not we could change America's direction. Through our members' hard work, people from throughout the tri-state area and our supporters from other states and nations gathered.

And on that first day of June, others gathered as well. Just as in Korea, where from the right and left, Christians and communists united to accuse and attack, outside Yankee Stadium the demonstrators were yelling, screaming and heaping all kinds of ridicule upon us. The police couldn't handle it, so we sent many of our core members out of their seats inside to cordon off the crowds of opponents and allow the more than 50,000 people to enter peacefully.

As history records, however, the real drama of Yankee Stadium was not in the protests. The real drama was the weather. Even though the sky was clouding up, thousands of people were in their seats and more thousands were entering the stadium. The banners and signs, sound system and staging were all set up; the band and choir were in place. Suddenly a violent rainstorm swept in from Long Island Sound. Fierce winds blew, rain poured down, our God Bless America banners were torn off the outfield walls and our posters were soaked. The equipment onstage was blown around. The rain soaked the people as well; it was an indescribable mess. And outside the stadium, the crowd of opponents was yelling, screaming and heaping all kinds of ridicule upon us.

One would have wondered, was God truly with us? Was this all part of God's plan? Then one of our young American leaders jumped onto the top of the home team dugout, raised his arms like a conductor in front of an orchestra, and started singing at the top of his lungs, "You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. You make me happy when skies are gray."

It was like a signal flare. With one heart, everyone began to sing, "You are my sunshine, my only sunshine!" A magnificent chorus spread through the stadium and tears of joy mixed with the drops of rain flowing down everyone's faces. The summer squall, our opponents' criticism, and the scramble to protect the equipment - these had only bolstered our spirit. Even though we were soaked, no one sought shelter. Heaven was the shelter that united the people of all races, nations and religions that filled the stadium.

That singing was the condition of faith and unity that moved God. The skies over the stadium began to brighten. The darkness cast in both heaven and earth was lifted. Rays of sunshine appeared, and the festival, which seemed utterly demolished, was reborn. Our volunteers swept the stage, wiped off the media equipment and cleared the grounds of fallen signage. Now, with the sunshine warming everyone, the program began.

Before he went out to the stage, my husband said a prayer. Then he grabbed my hand and said, "Thanks to your sincere devotion and prayer, I am going on stage today." My husband's smile of gratitude was warmer than the sun that was shining through the clouds. I truly felt that we and our entire global family had pierced the darkness. From the borderline of death, we had resurrected into a bright future for heaven and earth. I brushed the cold raindrops from my face and gave him a hug of encouragement.

We had strong faith in God and in the salvation of the world, and we did not lose courage, because we were fully aware that God was with us. Compared to the hardships and oppression we faced in our homeland before coming to the United States, this was nothing. We transformed shouts of opposition into songs of glory. The pouring rain and gusts of wind blew away our signs but not our love.

As my husband took the stage, the audience greeted him with loud applause. "Who are the true Americans?" he asked. "True Americans are those who have a universal mind. True Americans are those who believe in the one family of humankind, transcendent of color and nationality as willed by God. True Americans are those who are proud of such international families, churches and nations consisting of all peoples." With faith and courage, the rally was a great success.

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It was 30 years later, in June of 2006, on our sprawling complex on Cheon Pyeong Lake in the Republic of Korea, that our movement opened its global capital, the Cheon Jeong Palace. In its gardens, I did not plant roses or lilies. I planted daffodils. And early each spring, as I see the yellow flowers peeking out from under the melting winter snow, I'm gently reminded of the Yankee Stadium event.

Daffodils, which overcome the wind and snow, are a signal for the advent of new life. Their bright little petals, the color of sunlight, are the first sign that spring has finally come. They will always be here, in a special place in my heart. To me, they symbolize the beauty and peace that is blossoming worldwide in our movement. They are seemingly small, but within them is a surge of new life that leads us to forget that there ever was a winter.

As a summer rain fell upon the lawn

In his 1991 novel, *Mao II*, an American writer, Don DeLillo, described the Unification movement's mass weddings as opening the path forward for humanity. Interestingly, he depicted our 1982 Blessing Ceremony at Madison Square Garden as having taken place at Yankee Stadium. Mr. DeLillo in any case described a oneness and harmony among thousands of young couples devoting their marriage and family to God, and observed, "We all are Moonies, or should be."

Back then, we were known, often not affectionately, as "the Moonies." The name was a creation of the media. We were new and exciting. Regardless of the name, Mr. DeLillo grasped something profound. I'm sure millions of Americans had similar intuitions. Everyone indeed should - and will someday - participate in the Blessing of marriage for world peace.

When my husband and I arrived in the United States in December of 1971, five years before the Yankee Stadium Rally, we saw a world adrift on a chartless ocean with no compass. The threat of communism was growing and Christianity was losing strength. Christian theologians even came up with justifications for communism. Young people wandered about, having no purpose or goals, seduced by sexual temptation and the false freedom advertised by the birth control pill. The United States, founded in the blood and sweat of people of faith who had crossed the Atlantic, risking their lives in pursuit of religious freedom, was breaking its covenant with God.

From the moment of our arrival in America, we rushed forward infused with heavenly energy. Increasing numbers of young people in the United States and the Western world were drawn to our idealistic teachings. We shared our hearts with the members about the challenges the world was facing and the responsibilities that, together with them, we wished to fulfill. "The democratic world is facing an urgent crisis due to the threat of communism," we explained, "We must invest everything in order to overcome this."

Within two months of our arrival, my husband and I conducted a speaking tour of seven cities, mobilizing members in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, San Francisco and Berkeley. It was difficult at first, but by the time we reached California, we had overflow audiences for our three nights of talks. In those cities, some among the young people who attended our speaking events committed themselves to our cause. By early 1973 we had several bus teams covering the country and a house center in most states. From these groups, reinforced by energetic leaders and members from Japan and Europe, including the Korean Folk Ballet, we formed the One World Crusade and a choir, the New Hope Singers International. We loved their fiery passion and desire to enlighten the world.

Through my husband's energy, in 1972, the year after arriving in the United States, we set in motion so many projects. We convened the first meeting of the International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences, at New York City's Waldorf Astoria Hotel. We established the American branch of the Professors World Peace Academy and strengthened the already-existing Freedom Leadership Foundation, dedicated to the victory over communism. At Belvedere, we taught hundreds of young members to live according to God's word, and in the fall of 1973, with our mobile teams and local centers fully functioning, we conducted a second national speaking tour, this time of 21 cities. In each city, we hosted a banquet for social leaders and clergy, where numerous mayors presented us with keys to their city. We then held three nights of public talks on God, America and the future of Christianity.

At that time, a crisis arose in America. In 1972, Richard Nixon had been elected to a second term as president by an overwhelming majority, but one year later, popular sentiment had turned against him. The media and Mr. Nixon's political opponents were demanding that he resign from office over the Watergate affair. His supposed allies had no power to defend him. Even Christian leaders drew back and kept silent.

It was my husband who spoke out. Our movement published "America in Crisis: Answer to Watergate: Forgive, Love, Unite" in 21 leading newspapers. This was not about forgiving President Nixon alone, Father said, but about forgiving, loving and uniting as a nation for the sake of the world.

Mr. Nixon's commitment was to win the Vietnam War and keep communism out of southeast Asia. In opposition, communist affiliates confused the American public, mounting demonstrations against him on college campuses and even on the National Mall. Seeking to awaken reverence for God and ignite a fire

among Americans thirsting for righteousness, our members began demonstrating for God and the dignity of the American presidency. We gained media attention and the president himself took notice.

Early in 1974, President Nixon sent us an invitation to meet him in the White House. Mr. Nixon was anxious, aware of the likelihood of impeachment. As members covered the White House in prayer, my husband counseled him to stand strong, confess any wrongdoing and call for national prayer, unity and renewal.

On the heels of our meeting with the president, we went out again, this time to speak in 32 cities, completing our coverage of all 50 states, including Alaska and Hawaii. At first, most Americans were perplexed to hear about a Christian leader from the East. But to know us is to love us, and wherever we went, people were touched and took something valuable from our message. Public interest increased by the day, and with it came controversy.

The final tour of that era, this one of eight cities, began that September 18 at New York City's Madison Square Garden, with a speech entitled, "The New Future of Christianity." It was the first really large venue the Unification Church had sought to fill, and the event had an amazing impact. More than 30,000 people packed the Garden, while another 20,000 had to be turned away.

Without a moment's rest, we held even more rallies that impacted the world. Our confidence to fill large arenas led to greater gratitude to God, our Heavenly Parent, and to our members who were, and are, devoted to Heaven's principle and providence. In the midst of this, in Korea, we displayed the power of the Victory Over Communism (VOC) movement at a rally of 1.2 million on Yoido Island in Seoul. This led to a nationwide movement aimed at the reunification of North and South Korea in the 1980s. The VOC teaching spread beyond Japan and Asia. Through the Confederation of Associations for the Unity of the Societies of the Americas (CAUSA), leaders in the Western Hemisphere, including national leaders in Latin America and 70,000 members of the clergy, attended the CAUSA workshops.

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The Yankee Stadium Festival, on June 1, 1976, was the first half of the God Bless America Festival, held to honor the bicentennial year of the United States' founding. With its success, we decided not to wait, but to hold a rally in Washington, D.C., at the Washington Monument, in September, just three months later. Not surprisingly, members of the US government with less-than-noble motives worked with narrow-minded religious leaders and "anti-cult" groups that preyed upon members' parents to launch an all-out attack on us. Always on the lookout for a controversy, the media built its audience by articles and news reports disparaging and criticizing us.

Arrayed against us at the Yankee Stadium and Washington Monument events were more than 30 opposition groups, including the US Communist Party. Nonetheless, without a trace of fear or the remotest consideration about pulling back, my husband and I set aside our personal safety and dedicated our lives to the future of the United States. We invested all we had to wake up the American churches and people to the reality of God, the truth of the Bible and the supreme importance of God-centered marriage and family life, beyond race, nation and religion. Declaring this message on the vast expanse of the National Mall was our goal, and nothing could change that.

After a good deal of back and forth, 40 days before the rally, the government granted the permit to hold our assembly on the National Mall. Now the die was cast. I felt as if I were entering a waterless desert with an oasis 40 days away. On the emotional level, that 40 days seemed as if it were more than 40 years.

Wherever I went, whatever I did, whoever I was with, I could think only about the rally. I was so absorbed in it that I would confuse breakfast with dinner, dinner with breakfast, and miss lunch altogether. I think that I was not the only one.

The rally was neither being held to promote the Unification Church nor to publicize the names of Sun Myung Moon and Hak Ja Han, quite the opposite. We sacrificed so much internally and externally to bring it about. We were informed that there might be a terrorist attack, but we were not afraid of that.

Finally, September 18, 1976, arrived, and with it our rally to mark the bicentennial of the United States took place in the vast grounds surrounding the Washington Monument. My husband and I arose early that morning, prayed deeply and headed to the National Mall with a heart more serious than that of someone on the way to the gallows, not out of fear for ourselves, but because of the enormous providential significance riding on the outcome.

There, more than 300,000 people gathered by mid-day, peacefully, hopefully, and gratefully. It was indeed a grand and miraculous sight. The American media, the government and certain religious hierarchies had opposed the Unification Church but we had surmounted all challenges.

The people of America's humble neighborhoods in Richmond, Washington D.C., Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, New York, New Haven, Boston and beyond, gathered for God and for America. They were what made the Washington Monument rally a huge success. Our members had mobilized all the buses available on the East Coast, more than a thousand, and had to bite their lips as many hundreds of would-be participants were left behind at the gathering places with no more buses to transport them. It is a

testimony to the American people's love of God and country that True Parents triggered. We could feel it: God is alive in America.

* * *

My husband and I had emigrated with our family to this unfamiliar land and we took on a challenging course. We concluded our first campaign with the success of the three rallies: Madison Square Garden in 1974 and the Yankee Stadium and Washington Monument rallies in 1976. Uttered with sincere devotion, our prayer was the light that ended the darkness. Its light was cast beyond the open-hearted people who attended our events, to illuminate all Americans and all people in our global village.

Understandably, the American people did not automatically welcome my husband and me warmly when we arrived "fresh off the boat" from a land in the far-distant East. They were unfamiliar with terms they were hearing for the first time, such as "Divine Principle" and "True Parents." There was only one reason that we were able to receive such a broad and deep response within four years of our arrival. It was not just that our message made sense. More than that, it was that our message re-awakened the religious vision upon which the United States of America was conceived. That is what triggered the significant response. Our prayers and sincere devotion, and our message about the importance of the family, summoning young people to recover their sense of morality and to strive for the perfection of true love in the community - this is what moved the hearts of the American people, for it is the founding vision of that nation.

Many young people came to realize that the Principle is the truth and joined our family movement. For these brothers and sisters, the Principle became the core axis of life. They shared the Principle with everyone from fellow youth carrying backpacks on the West Coast to the elite leaders in the universities and the government. They gained the support of people of all races, occupations, ages and educational backgrounds. My husband and I toured the United States to encourage and inspire not just the public, but our members. We called them to establish schools, create newspapers, get their doctorates, link cultures through programs such as the Little Angels, dance troupes and rock bands, raise funds going shop to shop and door to door, create home churches, fish businesses and restaurants, and organize volunteer service projects. On every path we trod, the blood, sweat and tears of our frontline missionaries, domestic and international, continued to flow. I was constantly in prayer.

At Belvedere, in the summer of 2016, the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Yankee Stadium Rally brought to mind this entire history. Returning from those memories, I viewed the hundreds of happy interracial families gathered on the lawn at Belvedere. As I rose to the podium, I set aside the emotions attached to that day of celebration and considered the future. Standing and speaking with a heart of grateful love, I let our members know that there is still much work to do. We cannot allow ourselves to be satisfied with those victories from decades ago. At the end of the day, I lingered at Belvedere. A summer rain fell upon the lawn, and once again, deep in my heart, I felt the call to focus my mind and continue on the path toward a world of hope and happiness as the Mother of peace.

A song of victory rang out from Danbury

My husband and I were well aware of the many who opposed us. The charge of "brainwashing" was a recurring accusation. Such scurrilous criticism always followed my husband and me. But such is the story of God's history, and we understood why. The movement against us in the United States reached its crescendo in the late 1970s. The Washington Monument Rally was the tipping point for those who hoped our movement would fail, and critics and fear-mongers now envisioned the Unification Principle spreading like wildfire throughout America. Donald Fraser, a congressman from Minnesota, took the lead on Capitol Hill, opening a hearing in the House Foreign Affairs Committee. We would be accused of involvement in a political scandal nicknamed "Koreagate" in the press. It had nothing to do with us, except that we were from Korea, but it was gaining publicity for members of Congress.

After Congressman Fraser chaired the hearing that investigated, without result, our movement in March and April of 1978, he failed in his campaign to win a seat in the US Senate. In 1980, however, he became mayor of Minneapolis, and he later signed a proclamation welcoming my husband and me to that fair city.

With a congressional committee coming up empty-handed, those who wanted to convict my husband of something, anything, asked the Internal Revenue Service to investigate us. Beginning in the late 1970s, our church was subjected to a full IRS audit. We opened our books, confident that we had done nothing wrong. For two years, we even provided a private office for an IRS team in our Manhattan headquarters building. "I have lived a life of sacrifice and service for America and the world," Father Moon declared publicly, "I have nothing to be ashamed of. This case is the result of racism and religious prejudice."

Although Father Moon had done nothing wrong, on October 15, 1981, the US district attorney in the Southern District of New York, on the third attempt with a grand jury, finally succeeded in lodging charges of tax evasion against him. Our lawyer knew that the newspapers and television stations' persistent attacks on our movement rendered it impossible to convene an unbiased jury of New York City citizens. Also, it would be hard to seat a jury that could understand the complexities of such a tax case. Father Moon therefore requested a bench trial, but the court did not accept this motion. In pleading their case, the government lawyers confused everyone in the courtroom, no one more than the members of the jury.

On May 18, 1982, the jury handed down their verdict. My husband was found guilty of owing a total of \$7,300 in taxes accrued over a three-year period, nearly 10 years prior. It is routine for people who underpay their taxes by far greater amounts to simply pay a fine. But for Father Moon, an evangelist from Korea? The judge pounded his gavel and pronounced his decision: "I sentence you to 18 months in prison and a \$25,000 fine." Upon this announcement, my husband immediately stood up, smiled, and walked across the courtroom, with his hand outstretched, to shake the hand of the government's lead prosecutor. The lawyer was startled. He turned his back on my husband, stuffed his papers in his briefcase and walked out of the courtroom.

* * *

American churches were paying close attention to our case. Holding church funds under the name of the pastor was common practice for them, and this became the basis of the accusation against my husband. The government was prosecuting someone for what was a general church practice, and if they could send my husband to jail for that, they could send anyone to jail. When Father Moon was pronounced guilty, they rose up. With one voice, the National Council of Churches, United Presbyterian Church in the USA, the American Baptist Churches in the USA, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National Conference of Black Mayors, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, the National Association of Evangelicals, and many others called the decision "an obvious oppression of religion." With them in our ranks, we founded the Coalition for Religious Freedom and Minority Alliance International, which organized rallies throughout the country to protest the verdict. Conscientious people of all denominations and political views recognized oppression when they saw it, and demonstrated on behalf of liberty.

On the foundation of this bipartisan support, we submitted an appeal to the United States Supreme Court. To our great disappointment, in May 1984, the Supreme Court washed its hands of it, thereby affirming the sentence. My husband's response? "It is the will of God." He was not concerned about going to prison. He had already turned the court's decision into the next step of God's plan to awaken America from spiritual death. He was incarcerated on July 20, 1984, at the Federal Correctional Institution in Danbury, Connecticut.

This whole affair was not about taxes. It was about the world's most powerful nation failing to investigate and understand the nature of our movement and the authentic reasons for our growth and influence. It was a misuse of governmental and media power induced by fear and ignorance. But God always works in mysterious ways. The Christian community united with us as it never had before. Major clerics were outraged that what could be characterized as an administrative mistake, if that, could be punished by 18 months in prison. Thousands of clergy throughout the United States protested. Hundreds spent a week in Washington, D.C., in the Common Suffering Fellowship. They studied the Principle and America's tradition of religious freedom, visited their congressional representatives, demonstrated outside the White House and proclaimed that when the government threw Father Moon in prison, it had thrown them in there as well.

Besides supporting this domestic ecumenical activism, Unification Church members around the world prayed unceasingly. Having no experience of the earliest years in Korea, they could not digest the reality that the Lord would be in prison. My husband and I comforted them. "From now, a new world will begin," Father Moon counseled our members, our family and me. "Now, not only America, but all humanity will be with us, and the drumbeat of hope will sound throughout the world."

* * *

July 20, 1984 is a day I wish I could erase from history. On that day, my husband left our home and was incarcerated in Danbury prison. As we departed at 10:00 that evening, he gave words of hope and encouragement to our members who had gathered at Belvedere. With several members, we drove to the prison. I was resolved not to reveal my emotions. Father Moon had asked the members to dispel their anger and sadness. "Do not cry for me," he told them, "Pray for America."

A feeling of deep darkness descended as we watched Father Moon enter the prison. We stood for a long time at the entrance, as if my husband might just turn around and come back out. With a sigh, I consoled everyone and we turned and walked away. My husband was embarking upon an unfair prison term in a foreign land, and I knew that I had to forgive the people who had put him there. It was our opportunity to practice our movement's most fundamental ethic, "Love your enemies, and live for their sake."

Sacrificing oneself, even in the face of death, and going even further to forgive and love those who accuse and deceive, is what we came to call "the Danbury spirit." The Danbury spirit is to give and give even after everything has been taken away, to forgive those involved, then to persevere, knowing something greater is bound to occur in accord with the heavenly will.

The road was dark on our nighttime journey home. My experiences during the more than 10 years of living in the United States had been more numerous than the pebbles along a riverbank. There were the speaking tours in which we had traversed the continent; there were the path-breaking conferences that reshaped the world of scientists, professors, theologians and clergy; there was the youth with boundless

energy welcoming new life in God's love. That road had been strenuous but incredibly rewarding and, in that light, my husband's imprisonment was a painful pill to swallow, a heavy cross to bear.

As a wife, I also was dealing with personal pain. My husband was nearing 65 years of age, and facing prison life by himself in the United States, barely knowing the English language, would not be easy. It had not been so long since I had given birth to our fourteenth child. I had been with my husband every time he appeared in a courtroom, before a congressional panel, or speaking to our members. And now this. It was very hard on my mind and body. Amid all this, I had to fill the leadership vacuum created by his absence.

My husband knew my thoughts and focused himself, and me, and our movement, on the way forward. The first thing the next morning, there he was, on the phone. "Share these words with the members," he told me, "Ignite the signal fire for Christianity according to the call of God."

I shared his words with our leaders and members. Energized by my husband, I knew what we had to do. "Now God has given us our next opportunity," I told them. "We must achieve what we are called to do, on the foundation of all we have accomplished so far. Through constructive activity and sincere spiritual conditions, God's heart will be moved. Our sincere devotion will bring Satan to surrender. Now is the time. History will record this as the welcoming of a new age."

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There is a saying that "when it rains, it pours," and indeed, on my path forward, almost before I could catch my breath, I ran headlong into another unexpected misfortune. A core leader of our movement, who had pioneered the Principle in America and who had actively defended my husband and me in the United States, suddenly went missing. We soon learned that Dr. Bo Hi Pak had been kidnapped and was locked up in a cellar somewhere in New York City. His captors declared themselves ready to kill him.

We had been exposing communist subversion through The News World and The Washington Times and demolishing Marxist ideological claims before tens of thousands of American clergy through CAUSA. Communists were enraged that the religious freedom of the United States had allowed our movement such influence. Lacking the police apparatus they would have had in North Korea, one leftist cell's ability to act against us was limited. But now, considering us vulnerable with the absence of Father Moon, they resorted to violent criminality and kidnapped Dr. Pak.

With my husband in prison, I had to solve the problem. The first thing I did was earnestly pray that the saintly man who had been abducted would hear my voice. Then I phoned United States Senator Orrin Hatch. Senator Hatch was a warm-hearted and fair-minded man who had spoken out on our behalf during the congressional hearings.

"This abduction is not based on personal resentment, nor is it for money," I informed him. "It is an attack on a man who is unmasking their wickedness through the media and through education." Senator Hatch responded that he would ask the FBI to investigate immediately. Lawyers and my trusted advisors told me that the FBI opening an investigation would increase the likelihood of violence on the part of the kidnapers and that it would be better to negotiate. I could not agree and I continued my desperate prayer.

As Dr. Pak shared with us later, his circumstances soon worsened. The kidnapers beat him severely and applied electric shocks. He lost consciousness and fell onto a cold basement floor. At that time, he heard a voice: "There is not much time, but they will not harm you further today. You will preserve your life if you escape within 12 hours. You can do it; use whatever means are available."

Dr. Pak heard my prayers in a dream. He regained consciousness and determined to escape. Using wisdom, Dr. Pak got his kidnapers to relax the conditions of his captivity and managed to escape. The next day, he returned home. I met him soon after that, and he gave me a full account of what had happened. "The voice of True Mother, which I heard in the darkness, sounded like the voice and revelation of God. Your words awakened me suddenly and gave me the wisdom and power to outwit my captors."

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As such events unfolded, a very difficult time turned into a time in which I was full of vigor. My desire to impart merciful love only deepened. Each day was rich with emotions, including cherished moments in which my husband shared with me his affection. At the start of each day, after he finished praying at 5:00 a.m., he would call me from a prison pay phone, and greet me with "My beloved Mother!"

I was permitted to visit him at the prison every other day. I would be driven there in a convertible, and when weather permitted, I would put the top down as we ascended the final hill on the prison grounds. Rain or shine, my husband always came out and waited for our arrival. With a longing heart, I would smile brightly and wave from the car. Sometimes he would look totally worn out, having just finished mopping a floor or washing dishes. What wife would feel comfortable seeing her husband like that? But I would suppress my sorrow and hug him with a bright smile. I often brought our two-year-old daughter, Jeong-jin, for he would be so happy to receive and embrace her.

When our brief meetings ended, my husband would send us off. As we drove back down the hill, worried tears would start to fall from my eyes. Wishing not to turn my face toward him and expose my weeping, I would just keep my face forward while waving good-bye. I knew that my husband would remain in place, his eyes fixed upon me, a prayer in his heart, waving silently until we were out of sight.

For the 13 months of Father Moon's imprisonment, I was coping with feelings of sorrow and injustice, but my responsibility to lead our church and the providence came first. I felt responsible for inspiring our members around the world while maintaining a firm axis with my husband, around which they would revolve, unwavering in their life of faith. With God's intervention, we actually enjoyed a sense of stability. When my husband was imprisoned, media professionals around the world gossiped and cynically predicted that the Unification Church would disappear. Some members of the media seemed to be anxiously waiting for that to happen, hoping to proclaim happily, "We told you so! The Unification Church is an empty shell cracking like an egg with nothing inside; its so-called believers are heading for the hills."

That did not happen. Quite the opposite: the number of our members and allies only increased. People understood that the US government had sent Father Moon to serve an unjust prison sentence for the crime of dedicating his life for the salvation of humanity. In their innermost hearts, all people cherish religious freedom.

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Despite Father Moon's incarceration, our global work for peace continued. The 13th International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences (ICUS) was scheduled to convene within a month of his imprisonment. For more than a decade, this annual meeting had brought scientists from around the world to discuss the unity of the sciences centered on absolute values. Staff and the attendees needed to know whether the conference would be held. Critics of the conference scoffed, saying, "It's all about Rev. Moon. Without him, they won't do it." Ignoring this, I simply said, "We will certainly hold the conference," and the preparations continued.

On September 2, 1984, our International Cultural Foundation conducted the 13th ICUS in Washington, DC. More than 250 scientists attended from 42 countries. I met and greeted them one by one, and took the podium to read the Founder's Address with confident resolution. Even though its founder was absent, the conference was a success. Scientists expressed gratitude and the staff members were happy. Everyone could see that this movement is of God and does not depend upon one individual.

The progress of our international conferences did not end there. In the summer of 1985, the Professors World Peace Academy (PWPA) was scheduled to convene a global congress in Europe. Once again, I heard about the worries of the planners and participants and I guided them as before, "We will hold it as planned."

Geneva, Switzerland was the conference venue. Dr. Morton Kaplan, a renowned political scientist at the University of Chicago, was the president of PWPA. He sought my husband's advice about the conference and met us at Danbury to receive it. Those days, my husband, even from prison, was acting on Heaven's guidance to halt the advance of communism at America's doorstep, in Nicaragua. His inspiration sparked the American president, Ronald Reagan, to take action. As this was unfolding, my husband and I saw that communism's global expansion camouflaged a serious crisis within its own borders and that its entire house of cards was soon to collapse. In 1970, Father Moon had prophesied that global communism would fall in the late 1980s, 70 years after its founding.

And so, to this University of Chicago political scientist, my husband announced our theme for the conference: "The Fall of the Soviet Union." Dr. Kaplan, looking at the global reality externally, objected. "Sociologists don't discuss something that has not happened." But Father Moon spoke with calmness and strength, "Communism will perish and the Soviet Union will collapse. You need to proclaim this fact at the gathering of scholars and professors from around the world." Dr. Kaplan again hesitated and asked: "How about if we say, 'the possible fall?'" Father Moon replied, "No. It's not just a possibility. Believe me and do as I say."

As he departed with me from the meeting, I could see that Dr. Kaplan's head was spinning. He was a world-renowned scholar, and he could not speak what he considered empty words, much less convene a conference based upon them. He said three times that he wanted to tone down the conference theme. I told Dr. Kaplan not to worry about anything and to follow my husband's advice. He still was looking for a way out. With winsome eyes, he came up with, "Wouldn't it be possible to use a word softer than 'fall?'" I didn't budge. My husband and I knew communism would collapse in the Soviet Union within a few years.

From August 13-17, 1985, the second Professors World Peace Academy international congress took place in Geneva with its title, "The Fall of the Soviet Empire: Prospects for Transition to a Post-Soviet World." Hundreds of university professors discussed the fall of communism from all angles. They heard Father Moon's prophecy that "Communism will collapse within a few years." They pricked up their ears, having never dreamed of such an idea. They were amazed that we had the conviction to go against conventional wisdom and political correctness. Their nerves were a bit on edge for another reason as well. They were aware that the Soviet Embassy stood directly across the street from the conference venue.

Some renowned sociologists and professors criticized our proclamation, even quite harshly. But, as we had predicted, the Soviet Union was dissolved just six years later. Interestingly, when the Soviet Union actually dissolved, some of these same scholars explained it as if they had seen it coming, with very few noting that it was Father and Mother Moon who had first predicted what would happen and even convened a conference with that as the specific title. My husband and I just continued on, working for the sake of the future.

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Even during his undeserved prison sentence, my husband greatly impressed other inmates with his exemplary demeanor and diligence. At first, the prisoners mocked him for being the founder of a strange new religion from the East and tried to pick quarrels with him. He handled it all with forbearance, warmth and dignity. As he had told me, he was looking forward to seeing whom God had prepared for him to meet there. Prisoners naturally are struggling with anger, resentment and selfishness, and he committed to make Danbury a place where love could flow.

Prisoners soon learned that Father Moon would spend his weekly stipend in the prison dispensary, and through the week, give everything away to lonely inmates. He held an early morning prayer service, and other prisoners gradually joined him. Some of the inmates came to consider my husband a true teacher; some called him the "saint of the prison." Guards and prison officials were also impressed. The New York Post published a cartoon at the time of Father Moon's release, August 20, 1985. It depicted all the prisoners bowing to Father Moon, and one prison official saying to another, "Get him out of here before he calls a mass wedding!" My husband and I chuckled over that.

As his wife and the mother of our children, my husband's imprisonment was my imprisonment. The Danbury course parallels Jesus' trial in front of the Roman Procurator, Pilate, and the punishment of his crucifixion. The forces that wanted Father Moon to disappear were always looking for an opportunity. The American FBI apprehended Red Army operatives in the United States who had been sent by the Soviet KGB and North Korea's Kim Il Sung to assassinate my husband. Among the prison inmates were men who harbored the same irrational hatred as those who had kidnapped Dr. Pak. My husband was living with such men, and no one could guarantee his safety. It was a modern version of Golgotha, as if he were on a cross with thieves to the left and right.

Despite such circumstances, we threw our lives into the salvation of America. As a result, although we were harassed, accused and imprisoned, my husband and I never gave up and we never will, whether on earth or in heaven. One with his bones and flesh, with his thoughts mine and my thoughts his, I give my entire mind and body to practice love for the sake of God's dream. I have walked this exhausting life course silently as the one called to bring the human family together as the Mother of peace, to heal our suffering planet as the Mother of the universe, and to bring joy to our Heavenly Parent as His only begotten Daughter.

My husband once called me a High Priest. He said that in God's dispensation until this era, men were the high priests, but we are entering the age of the wife, and women need to carry out the priestly ministry. It is women whom our Heavenly Parent is calling to serve as the mediators of forgiving, purifying and regenerating grace to all humanity.

I will not leave you as orphans

As the Last Supper approached, Jesus comforted his disciples, saying, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you." This passage condenses into a few words the path I have walked. Even though all human beings have parents, as we have wandered through history without knowing God or the true way of life, we have felt like orphans. I have striven throughout my life to lead humanity to the welcoming, forgiving, rebirthing love of God, who is our Heavenly Parent.

As recently as the 1990s, if a woman headlined an event or speaking tour in a rural area of Korea, people would look in askance and dismiss the whole idea. They could not comprehend the idea that a woman could address audiences of women and for women. At that time, women had no public voice. Society officially declared that men and women have equal value, but in practice, such a declaration was hardly worth the paper it was printed on. No one, man or woman, could as much as find a starting point for an intelligent discussion of the matter. I had long pondered if and when women would fulfill their role as perfected human beings, as fully co-creative and significant members of society, and especially as daughters of God. My husband and I had deep experiences in prayer during the Danbury imprisonment, and we together concluded that it was time for the liberation of all women, and for me to take a public role to teach and exemplify it. Thus arose a careful creation of the spiritual and physical foundations for what came to be called the Women's Federation for World Peace.

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My husband began teaching about my position as a true woman standing at God's left side with him on God's right side; about me being a true woman and co-founder of our movement; about me being a true woman serving, as he does, as an individual embodiment of True Parents; and about me being a true woman having the same authority, inheritance and rights as he. After our meetings with President Mikhail and Mrs. Raisa Gorbachev and with Chairman Kim Il Sung, about which I will share, we decided it was

time for the declaration of True Parents to the world. As his wife, I am my husband's first witness. And as my partner in the love of Heavenly Parent, he was the first to advocate that I reach the world with our message of peace.

My husband and I founded the Women's Federation for World Peace. After its inaugural rally at the Olympic Stadium in Seoul in April 1992, about which I will also speak below, I held a series of events to launch Women's Federation chapters in 40 Korean cities. I spoke on the theme, "Women Will Play a Leading Role in the Ideal World." We wondered what would be the turnout for these events and were gratified that every venue was filled to capacity. Although the speech focused on women, many men attended as well. I saw the era of women that my husband and I were advocating taking shape before my eyes.

When the Korean speaking tour was over, we planned a speaking schedule for me to launch the Women's Federation in Japan. "Japanese women need to hear these words, too," I told our logistics team.

"True," they replied, "But you speak Korean, and through the interpreter, the original meaning will not be fully conveyed."

"I agree," I said, with the follow-up: "Then I shall speak in Japanese." When my husband heard about this, even he wanted to talk it over. "It would be much easier to use an interpreter. The speech is long, and you don't know Japanese well. You have to leave soon. Are you confident that you can speak to them in Japanese?"

As soon as the words were out of his mouth, he knew my answer. I didn't need to say anything. I practiced the speech in Japanese for a few days, my motivation being that the Japanese people should not remain orphans. I was determined to explain to them, in their language, the reality that we all have been orphans, and that today, through True Parents, we can become children of our Heavenly Parent.

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On September 24, 1992, a crowd of 50,000 people gathered at the Tokyo Dome. It was my first time speaking publicly in Japanese, and this was a prominent venue in Japan's capital. The audience was aware of this. No one, Korean or Japanese, had high expectations for the outcome. The organizers, being prudent, prepared a young Japanese interpreter to stand just off-stage, in case I faltered. But when I came to the podium and began to speak, the audience was surprised. They cheered and stood up to applaud. For a few minutes they remained anxious, thinking, "Surely she'll make a mistake." But as I continued, and each sentence impressed God's word in their hearts, the audience looked relaxed and happy.

Over the next nine days, I gave that speech in seven cities without losing strength, and then for three more days, I delivered it to Koreans residing in Japan. I uplifted the hearts of all Japanese as well as Korean women.

"I need to speak in America," I then told my staff.

"Won't that be difficult?" they responded. "Please, let's take at least a full day's rest before flying." But my mind was already in the West. "Many people are waiting for me," I uttered without thinking, "I cannot rest."

I crossed the Pacific and stepped onto American soil. Speaking in the eight largest cities of the US, I announced that the era of women was near and what it means for men, women and God. On the first day, the people of Washington, DC, thanked me deeply. They had thought of me only as "the wife of Rev. Sun Myung Moon from Korea," but now their perception changed. I was now, "Hak Ja Han, who represents us, and represents the aspirations and value of all women." I planted in their hearts the seeds of female leadership that is necessary to complete the salvation of the world.

My inaugural speaking tour for the Women's Federation continued through Europe, Russia, Asia and Oceania. I will never forget what happened when I spoke in the Philippines. The day before the event, I flew from Los Angeles to Manila. On the plane, I took a short nap, during which I dreamed I was breastfeeding a baby. As I looked at the beautiful baby, I said to myself, "I'm not of an age to give birth anymore."

When I arrived in Manila, I discovered that it was a Catholic holy day, December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. A woman walking on the street in downtown Manila happened to see a poster advertising my speech. The poster had me in a yellow Korean dress. Suddenly, the thought, "This is the person who will fulfill Mother Mary's mission," came into her mind. Then and there, she decided to attend my event. She was deeply moved by my speech, during which she arose and loudly exclaimed, "The one who came to the Philippines on this holy day is truly our Mother Mary!" Cheers erupted throughout the convention center.

The final venue on that tour was China's Great Hall of the People in Tiananmen Square. It was an event both very difficult and very rewarding. We expected that, since China's open-door policy was in place, everything would go smoothly, but that was not the case. From the outset, the Communist Party and the military had refused to grant a permit. When we explained that it wasn't a political rally, they said, "We

will check the script first. It cannot have anything in it about God." That took them a week. Their conclusion: "We cannot allow this kind of content."

I strongly argued with them. They repeatedly gave their reasons to change my speech, but I didn't yield. I insisted that the message had nothing to do with politics and that its focus was on women. The matter stood at a tipping point. At that time, President Deng Xiaoping's son, Deng Pufang, was the chairman of the China Disabled Persons Federation, an organization consisting of 500,000 people. The day before the event, the young Mr. Deng invited me and other Women's Federation leaders to a reception held by his organization. It was a harmonious meeting, where we encouraged one another despite the differences in our systems and ideologies. Hearing of this pleasant experience, that evening, the All-China Women's Federation welcomed us to their gathering. We didn't know each other well, so it felt awkward at first, but soon all of us ladies became friends and had a good time singing happily together.

Even though social receptions and official public events are two different things, with confidence based on our positive experiences with two national organizations related closely to the president, I stood my ground and gave the original speech. The audience in this communist country was surprised when they heard me say the name of God, not just once, but dozens of times. I was calm, as I knew I should be in that circumstance. It was revolutionary to give such a speech in the Great Hall of the People. It was the revolutionary power of a woman. In such circumstances, I carried out that 1992 speaking tour in 113 locations around the world.

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When I departed Korea for this speaking tour, I had several outfits, a collection suitable for the variety of climates I would encounter. When I returned, all I had was the suit I was wearing. I always give away my clothes, and I had been gone for most of the year. When my husband welcomed me, his first words were, "You did a good job." Then, glancing at my hands, out of the blue, he asked, "By the way, where's your wedding ring?"

I looked at my hand. Only then did I remember it was gone. "I don't have the ring," I said, "I must have given it to someone."

"To whom did you give it?" he asked, incredulous.

"Ahhh, yes, I gave it to someone during the tour," I said. "But I don't remember who it was. I gave it to someone either to keep as an heirloom or, if necessary, to sell for her family's well-being."

My husband made the natural comment, "It's fine that you gave it away, but you don't remember who you gave it to?"

We really don't focus so much on personal possessions, and that is how we've always been. As we looked into each other's eyes, my husband's gratitude for that quality in me surfaced. He collected himself, smiled and nodded, and the welcoming celebration proceeded.

My husband and I could not have a honeymoon. I didn't mind, but he had always felt remorseful. When we visited the Netherlands during a speaking tour - it must have been 1969 - after much thought, he bought me a small diamond ring with some money he had saved. That was the meaning of that ring, but now I had given it to someone and had even forgotten that I had done so. I do give things away out of sympathetic love, and then I let it go. Those who give what they have, give their heart, and even their life, and do not cling to the memory, are the ones whom God visits. My husband knows I am like that, and he is, too. Just as I had done, he let it go.

That 1992 global speaking tour was by no means a vacation; it covered 113 cities, 24 time zones, venue upon venue, check-in upon check-in, crowd upon crowd, schedule upon schedule, pressure upon pressure. I was speaking on the value and mission of women, the way to peace in the family and world, and the love of Heavenly Parent. This was to open the gates for the world's people who are stranded as lonely orphans, to welcome them into the loving, liberating embrace of True Parents. Only when we receive God's Blessing in marriage can we leave the orphanage and receive our inheritance as the sons and daughters of God who enjoy true happiness.

I am here to give my wedding ring to everyone.