

Leaving Hungnam Prison - What happened to my disciples and tattered clothes

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Chambumo Gyeong - Book 7. True Parents' Course of Suffering and Victory - Chapter 1. Suffering and Victory during the Japanese Occupation and in Communist North Korea - Section 5. Gathering Lost Family Members - The Korean War



Photo 1982

2. While I was in Hungnam Prison, the Korean War broke out. The North Korean Communist Party planned to send all prisoners to the 38th parallel to die on the front lines. When the battle situation became increasingly urgent, they tried to move those who had long prison terms further north and send the remaining two-thirds of the prisoners to the front lines. In order to implement the strategy of throwing waves of men into action, they dragged everyone out, whether they liked it or not. Any prisoners who did not follow orders were shot.

About 800 prisoners were forced to go to Jeongpyeong, near Hungnam. Trains had been operating between Hungnam and Wonsan, but the United Nations air forces had destroyed parts of the railroad. Those prisoners then had to walk the 50 kilometers from Jeongpyeong to where they could board a train for Wonsan. The authorities kept about 70 prisoners at Hungnam and sent the rest away. At that time, I was among those taken from the prison. We departed at 8:00 in the evening and walked all night until dawn, covering about 30 kilometers. We did not walk during the day because of the air attacks. Trains could operate only at night; so we were to arrive at the place where we could board the train to Wonsan around 4:00 in the morning. We could not make it to our destination in one day; the plan was that we were to arrive there on the second night.

But the train that was sent by the central headquarters to carry us had an accident on the way, and we had to remain there for a few days. With the prisoners there and the train not ready to go, the guards faced a serious problem. There were only a few guards and a great many prisoners. So, in order to avoid potential problems, we were all brought back to the prison. Three days after we arrived in Hungnam, they again took out the prisoners, still numbering about 800. But this time I was not included, and I remained in prison. Eventually I was freed. (154-137, 1964/06/12)

3. When I was freed and finally left Hungnam Prison, four men followed me. Each said, "Teacher, wherever you go, I will go." Instead of seeking out their wives and children, they unconditionally followed me. They said they would not return to their hometowns. These four people followed me to Pyongyang.

Among them was a man of the Moon clan. Thus, I was able to establish a Cain-type person from the Moon family. But in the process of traveling to the South, we were separated from him after I sent him on a mission to find someone. I thought that the reason he remained in the North was that he was Cain, while I, in the position of Abel, went to the South. When I have a chance to return to North Korea, I will find him if he is still alive. If he died, I would like to visit his grave and place a memorial stone there. I pray

for him to this day, thinking, "If your dedication continues to this day, the day will come when North Korea and South Korea will embrace each other." Before I pray for my mother or father, I am praying for him. (060-237, 1972/08/17)

4. Among the inmates who left with me and followed me when I left Hungnam Prison was a man from the Moon clan. He had been the section chief of the South Hamgyeong provincial government in Hamheung, and his name was Moon Jeong-bin. One of his subordinates had made a mistake, and as he was accountable for it he was sent to prison. He and I were in the same cell. Having received a message from the spirit world, he followed me.

After we were freed from prison, he accompanied me from Hungnam to Pyongyang. He had a wife and children. After we left the prison, we stopped by his home to say goodbye to his family, and he then continued with me. We planned to travel from Pyongyang to the South. Kim Won-pil's mother was a church member; we wanted to bring her with us, but she was not at home, having gone to Sunan to sell things at the market. We had to leave within a few days but she had not yet returned, so I sent Moon Jeong-bin to Sunan to try to find her and bring her back.

I anticipated it would take one or two days on foot, but he did not come back either. The situation at that time was becoming increasingly untenable for us due to the Chinese communist army, which was threatening to surround our area. Unavoidably, we had to leave before Jeong-bin and Won-pil's mother returned. That is why, although Moon Jeong-bin had pledged his life to me, in the end he was unable to come with us to the South. (130-325, 1984/02/13)

5. When I left Hungnam Prison for Pyongyang, there were many men who wanted to follow me. They insisted they would follow me rather than return to their families in their hometowns. Although they said they would not go to their hometowns, it was the right thing for them to do. So once we arrived in Pyongyang, I told them all to go to their hometowns and to return on a certain date at a specific time. However, because of the withdrawal of the United Nations forces, we were compelled to leave Pyongyang earlier than planned. As a result some of them were not able to come with us. I think I will meet them again someday. Those who offer dedication and are loyal to heaven will never perish.

I know God loves me, because when I experienced loneliness in my heart and no one in the world knew, God came to me and helped me. This occurred not just once or twice. When I look back and recall those experiences, I cannot forget heaven's grace. (158-054, 1967/02/14)

6. I was in Hungnam Prison for about two years and five months. When I left the prison I brought with me the clothes that I had worn while I was working at the factory. All of my clothes -- my work clothes, shirts and underwear -- were made of cotton. Since my workplace at the prison was an ammonium sulfate fertilizer factory, the cotton deteriorated when it came in contact with the sulfuric acid and ammonia from the fertilizer manufacturing process. Since cotton is vulnerable to acid, when the clothes were stretched even a bit, they tore. After I had worn them a long time, they became tattered and threadbare. In my tattered work clothes I looked like the beggar of beggars. My clothes reeked, and if you rubbed them, the spot just turned to powder. But I could not throw them away. I knew that they would be treasured as historical artifacts of the Unification Church.

Since I could not throw them away, I removed the cotton lining from my comforter, folded these tattered work clothes that I had worn for two and a half years, and packed them inside. Before I went to sleep, I took them out of my blanket and spread them out to keep them from being damaged. What asset did I possess other than those clothes that I could take with me from prison? That is why I carried them with me on the ten-day walk from Hungnam to Pyongyang.

After I arrived in Pyongyang, I could not hold on to my former belongings there. Nevertheless, I asked one member to take special care of these clothes, saying, "Even if you throw away your own silk garments and your brocade blankets, you have to bring these clothes back to me without fail." However, I discovered later that when this woman came to the South she brought only her own belongings, having thrown away my clothes. So, I lost them. If I had those clothes now, I would not have to say even one word to explain my life in prison. They would have been the best evidence, which could not be exchanged even for the whole world. (083-260, 1976/02/08)

7. Emerging from Hungnam Prison, I carried the tattered clothes that I wore during my incarceration. You would not make even a penny if you tried to sell them. If you gave them to a Korean taffy seller, he would not give you even half a stick of taffy for the lot. I gave away the silk pants and jackets that my mother brought me and for almost three years I wore those garments, which were fit only for the dead.

Why did I need these clothes that were so deteriorated that if you touched them the spot would disintegrate into dust? I needed them because they would become a great treasure in a decade, in a century, or in several centuries -- a true relic that you would not be able to purchase even with millions or billions of dollars in gold. Imagine if there existed a shard of a utensil that Jesus had used in Jerusalem; you would not be able to buy it, even for all of England or America. Young people today may laugh at this, but since my prison clothes were more precious than any fortune, I carried them with me despite my difficult circumstances. (026-020, 1969/10/14)