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Spirit World Messages, Cross Removals and Coronations: Balancing Messianic Necessity and Coalition-Building

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The Unification movement (UM) includes two main constituencies. Those who accept the teaching and authority of Rev. and Mrs. Moon comprise the movement's core. They make up the membership of the Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity (HSA-UWC) or Unification Church and the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU). A broad range of coalition partners who accept one or more of the movement's publicly stated goals comprise the second main constituency and surround the core. They make up the membership or otherwise support a wide spectrum of UM-sponsored entities organized for specific purposes.

The UM has proved to be adept in coordinating its two constituencies. During the Cold War era, the movement evidenced a remarkable ability to reach and "ideologically arm" a wide variety of opinion leaders. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the UM proved equally proficient in generating a broad constellation of "federations for world peace." It also involved academics and religious practitioners in an array of ecumenical and interfaith endeavors, including the movement's signature International Marriage Blessings.

In assembling and holding together its core membership and coalition partners, the movement faced numerous obstacles. Early on, it fought off efforts to label Rev. Moon a cult leader, its followers as "brainwashed," and its supporters as naïve or bought-off. The longer term challenge was to coordinate its explicit, often provocative messianic teachings and practices with acceptable public discourse and protocol. This became especially pressing after 2001 when Rev. Moon proclaimed *Cheon Il Guk*, "nation of cosmic peace and harmony," the Unification equivalent of the Kingdom of Heaven.

After 2001, the UM went into full-scale kingdom-building mode. In doing so, it followed three major lines of advance. The first centered on faith leaders. It focused on breaking down barriers among religions and promoting a marriage-friendly culture. A second line of advance focused on secular leaders willing to become "Ambassadors of Peace" and support movement initiatives for world peace. A third trajectory, known as "The Realm of Life," focused on the UM's core believers as they set about the business of birthing a *Cheon Il Guk* nation. The UM "registered" citizens of *Cheon Il Guk*, promulgated the first articles of the "constitution of the Kingdom of Heaven," constructed an "Original Palace," conducted coronations, and instituted a new "Heavenly Calendar." In short, the UM began the process of establishing a reality that evoked and embodied its vision of ultimate order.

After the proclamation of *Cheon Il Guk*, the UM's messianic premises intruded to a greater degree than previously on its coalition partners. This article examines three separate instances in which boundaries between its lines of advance became blurred. The first of these followed the movement's propagation of "spirit world messages" validating Rev. and Mrs. Moon as the True Parents of Humankind and Messiah. Rev. Moon directed that a series of collected messages, titled "A Cloud of Witnesses," be published by leading newspapers in all 50 states. A second instance followed Rev. Moon's call for Christian clergy to "take down the cross" as a divisive symbol and thereby establish a condition for reconciliation with Judaism. A third was Rev. and Mrs. Moon's "coronation" as Peace King and Queen in a Senate Office Building.

Each of these instances created strains between core members and coalition-partners that needed to be managed. Many supportive clergy were upset or felt betrayed by the "Cloud of Witnesses" document. The call to "take down the cross" was likewise difficult for clergy associated with the movement and scandalized those who were not. "Peace King" coronations of Rev. and Mrs. Moon, two of which were conducted in U.S. government buildings, sparked pointed criticism for crossing the church-state divide. This article describes these cases in detail. The focus is on strategies employed by the UM to keep its coalitions intact and stay the course in pursuing its goals.

Ironically, the coalitions held but cracks opened up within the UM's core membership. Prior to Rev. Moon's passing in 2012, a constituency centered on his eldest living son broke away and defined themselves exclusively as a peace movement, in effect, aligning with the movement's coalition partners at the expense of its messianic core. [1] After Rev. Moon's passing, another constituency led by his youngest living son broke away and identified exclusively with the movement's messianic core at the expense of its coalition partners. [2] In this regard, careful consideration of how the UM balanced competing pulls of messianic necessity and coalition building will assist the mainstream movement in charting a path forward.

A Cloud of Witnesses

Acceptance by Christianity is a key component in the validation of Rev. Moon's ministry. Over the years, U.S. clergy supported the UM on religious freedom grounds. Many accepted invitations for dialogue and a significant number resonated with the movement's stand on family values. In May 2000, the movement funded a trip to Korea for 120 clergy from 17 denominations. This led to the creation of the American Clergy Leadership Conference (ACLC). ACLC ministers subsequently sponsored a nationwide "We Will Stand in Oneness" revival tour. It featured Rev. Moon as keynote speaker and covered 52 American cities (in all 50 states) in 52 days between February 25 and April 17, 2001. The tour, in turn, led to an "Interfaith Marriage Blessing" of 60 clergy couples presided over by Rev. Moon in the Cotillion Room of the Hilton Hotel in New York City on May 27, 2001.

ACLC ministers were at the forefront of movement efforts to extend clergy blessings and marriage re-dedications worldwide. On April 27, 2002, 700 representative clergy couples gathered at the Sheraton National Hotel, Arlington, Virginia. This was the main venue for what the UM billed as a "144,000 Clergy Blessing." Another representative gathering of 700 couples, many of them younger, met at the Sheraton National for a 1,440,000 "Second Generation Christian Youth and World Religious Youth Blessing" on July 3, 2002. Skeptics might question the numbers of those participating by satellite link. Nonetheless, the UM had developed a viable coalition of clergy capable of supporting revival tours and Blessing events. It also was apparent that the coalition was growing.

Spirit World Messages

Given these promising developments, Rev. Moon's announcement to clergy at dinner the evening of the July 3 Blessing was unexpected. He told them, "Tomorrow morning we will meet at 6 a.m., at which time we will read the statements from the spirit world, beginning with the four great religious leaders and others... Please join us." The next day, July 4, 2002, leading newspapers in all 50 states began publishing "A Cloud of Witnesses: The Saints Testimonies to the True Parents" in ad space purchased by the movement. This development threatened to undermine everything that had been achieved.

Commerce with the spirit world was nothing new to the Unification movement. *Divine Principle*, the UM's core theological text, states,

For many decades, he [Sun Myung Moon] wandered in a vast spiritual world in search of the ultimate truth. On this path, he endured suffering unimagined by anyone in human history. God alone will remember it. Knowing that no one can find the ultimate truth to save mankind without going through the bitterest of trials, he fought alone against myriads of Satanic forces, both in the spiritual and physical worlds, and finally triumphed over them all. In this way, he came in contact with many saints in Paradise and with Jesus, and thus brought into light all the heavenly secrets through his communion with God. [3]

The preface to "A Cloud of Witnesses" likewise noted, "Since Jesus called him in 1935, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon has carried on a ministry to spirit world in parallel with his ministry on Earth." [4] However, for most of that time, this was a matter of internal UM consumption. A few scholars close to the movement took notice and in the late 1980s, there was limited publicity over a Black Zimbabwean who led a movement-wide revival as the "returning resurrection" of Rev. Moon's deceased second son. [5] During the 1990s, a female Korean who claimed to be the embodiment of Mrs. Moon's deceased mother led movement-wide revival of longer duration and influence. [6] Nonetheless, spiritual phenomena associated with the latter revival were mainly relevant to the movement's core membership, not outsiders. Given this background, Rev. Moon's decision to go public with "A Cloud of Witnesses" introduced a new dynamic.

"A Cloud of Witnesses" derived from "seminars" in the spirit world conducted by Dr. Sang Hun Lee (d. 1997), a former medical doctor and leading proponent of Unification philosophy. [7] For all his intellectual acumen, Dr. Lee was bothered by his inability to clearly answer questions about the spiritual world. He devoted himself to a study of the topic and after his wife's death in 1989, published excerpts of their correspondence as communicated through Young Soon Kim, a church medium. Following Dr. Lee's death, Young Soon Kim published a volume of Dr. Lee's messages from the spirit world titled *Life in the Spirit World and on Earth* (1998) which circulated widely among the movement's core membership and was authorized by Rev. Moon. Young

Soon Kim recorded the first messages from Dr. Lee's spirit world seminars from Feb. 3 to April 11, 2001. They included a section on "Secrets of Spirit World" as well as messages of Jesus, Buddha, Confucius and Muhammad to their followers and all people on earth. It also included a message from Socrates to "Intellectuals." The reception of this report within the movement was mixed. However, Rev. Moon regarded the messages to be significant. At a June 22, 2001 leaders' meeting, he stated, "All the messages from Sang Hun Lee should be considered to be from me. You should not wonder if they are true or not." [8] This cleared the way for further manifestations.

Young Soon Kim recorded a second set of messages from August 27 to November 12, 2001. These were titled, "Messages from 120 Christians—An Intermediate Report." This installment included testimonies of Jesus' twelve disciples as well as 15 central figures of the Old Testament, 26 representatives of ancient and medieval Christianity, 35 representative figures of Protestant churches, and 13 disciples of Confucius. [9] It expanded the scope of coverage, giving priority to Christianity but including Jewish and Confucian traditions. Rev. Moon asked that these be published, and on December 31, 2001 the movement had them run in ad space bought from *The Washington Times* and in papers throughout the world. However, this had limited impact since few, if any, ACLC ministers read the conservative *Washington Times* or overseas papers.

Ms. Kim received a third set of messages titled "Report on the Seminar in the Spirit World for 120 Communists" from April 18 to May 9, 2002. It included expressions of "profound remorse and regret for their actions on Earth" but also "gratitude for being given the opportunity to hear the *Divine Principle* and Unification Thought teachings." [10]

Material from these reports plus a "resolution by representatives of the five great religions" and a "Letter from God" was included in the final published version, *A Cloud of Witnesses: The Saints Testimonies to the True Parents*. The document also included a preface from editors which contextualized the content. It described the testimonies as "a complex document" and advised readers "to relax and open your minds." It referenced Rev. Moon's spirit world ministry and asserted that the document had "significant practical as well as spiritual import," defining it as "a unifying message, addressing believers of all faiths as one global family." According to the editors, "The testimonies appeal to Father Moon's teachings and works as the evidence of their veracity." Therefore, they encouraged readers "to move beyond these messages and duly pursue study of his teachings and works." Essentially, the preface was an effort to soften and deflect attention from passages deemed to be controversial or even outlandish. [11]

"A Cloud of Witnesses" began by recounting a December 25, 2001 "Ceremony in spirit world for the adoption and proclamation of a resolution of a written resolution by the representatives of the five great religions." Dr. Sang Hun Lee served as master of ceremonies. Apart from "Proclamation of the written resolution," the "Order of the ceremony" included recitation of the UM's "Family Pledge," a representative prayer by Jesus and "Three cheers of victory, led by Mohammed: Victory for God, Victory for True Parents, Victory for the five great religions." The statement also included a description of the seating arrangement: front seats filled by leading representatives of the five great religions; behind them, 12 other representatives of each religion; and in the back area, 120 representatives of each religion. Jesus' prayer was brief, "We of the five great religions, attending God above us and True Parents horizontally, pledge and proclaim that we will go the way of absolute obedience, in order to correct all of the wrongs committed throughout history." This was followed by the five-part written resolution, affirmed by representatives of the five great religions,

1. We resolve and proclaim that God is the Parent of all humankind.
2. We resolve and proclaim that Reverend Sun Myung Moon is the Savior, Messiah, Second Coming and True Parent of all humanity.
3. We resolve and proclaim that the Unification Principle is a message of peace for the salvation of humanity and the gospel for the Completed Testament Age.
4. We resolve and proclaim that we will accomplish the peaceful unification of the cosmos through "living for others" while transcending religion, nationality and race, centering on true love.
5. The representatives of the five great religions resolve and proclaim that we will harmonize with one another, unite and move forward, in order to bring about the nation of God and world peace, while attending True Parents. [12]

Next came brief messages from religious founders and additional representatives from each of their traditions followed by messages from representative communist leaders.

The following conveys a sense of the testimonies. Peter and Paul pledged "to attend the Lord of the Second Coming." Luther

stated he would “proudly proclaim that the Unification Principle is the new gospel for humanity.” John Wesley said he would “pledge and pledge again to live according to the direction and teachings of the True Parents.” Karl Barth said he wished “to live a life of attendance to, and receive guidance from, the Reverend Sun Myung Moon.” St. Augustine said he “will move forward strongly in realizing the ideal of the Completed Testament Age.” Marx stated that his “theoretical paradigm was crumbling as I listened to the Godism lecture.” Lenin said, “The ideal of Communism will be realized by its being engrafted upon Unification Thought.” Stalin termed Rev. Moon’s thought “messianic, especially for communist countries.” [13]

“A Cloud of Witnesses” concluded with “A Letter from God” addressed to “My beloved True Parent.” God’s sentiments, as recounted in the letter, were,

My beloved Son! My beloved Son! I, Jehovah, the God of all humankind, deeply love you and cherish you. Your heart is full of gratitude and thankfulness, yet My gratitude and appreciation for you is beyond words. The word "love" is inadequate to express My feelings, but no better word comes to mind.

My beloved True Parent, you dwell deep inside My heart, and my love for you is beyond description... You suffered incarceration many times. You took up My cross and endured countless trials and tribulations on My behalf. Now the God of all humankind would like to convey His gratitude, adoration and zeal to you, True Parent. I want you to inherit everything that is Mine.

My beloved True Parent! I am taking this opportunity to convey My grateful heart to you. I want to embrace you in My bosom and never let you go! I would carry you on my back and never let your feet touch the ground! I would hold you, and we would talk together all night long. I, Jehovah the Lord of all humankind, trust you, True Parent. I know the many heartbreaking stories of your suffering and sorrow. I know them all, remember them all and witnessed them all. I was responsible for placing you in those situations, yet you endured them all and set the standard of a victorious foundation. For this accomplishment I will never forget you. Thank you, thank you, True Parent! Thank you for your dedication and toil! [14]

In addition to expressing his sentiments, God also validated Rev. Moon’s position, stating,

You have been victorious on every level and have restored to its proper position everything that had fallen. Is it not fitting, therefore, that you be the Savior of humankind, the Messiah and King of kings?

On December 25, 2001, the founders and leading figures of Christianity and the other major religions drew up a resolution and proclaimed unanimously that, along with you, they would participate in the realization of peace and the unity of heaven and earth. Therefore it is only appropriate that you be exalted as the True Parent of all humankind. This is the will of Jehovah, the God of all humankind.

Although the world's population does not fully understand the position of the True Parent, it must be internally secured. Hence, Jehovah, the God of all humankind hereby bestows upon His beloved True Parent the title, King of all kings. [15]

Controversy

“A Cloud of Witnesses” was unequivocally direct. Although couched in idioms congenial to Unification thinking, the testimonies were a challenge even to committed Unificationists. The English-language editor of “Messages from 120 Christians—an Intermediate Report,” himself a long-time Unification leader, confessed,

To read of a seminar in spirit world that includes Jesus, his twelve disciples, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, St. Francis and so many other figures well-known and obscure seems utterly fantastic. Further, that they all sing the same chorus of praise for the *Divine Principle* and the Reverend Sun Myung Moon seems disingenuous in light of the fact that the report is provided by devout followers of Reverend Moon and is published by his church. [16]

The editor resolved his conflicts. It remained to be seen how the messages would be received by ACLC clergy.

Rev. Moon insisted that the messages be disseminated as widely as possible. Apart from being published in ad space purchased

from leading newspapers in all 50 states, he directed movement leaders at all levels to announce the declarations and resolutions from the spirit world “to the highest level VIPs and leaders of every field, and elicit supporting declarations from them.” He also directed that the messages be read at church events, assemblies and rallies. [17] At a meeting with clergy leaders in September, he said, “Don’t you think... [I] prayed deeply and calculated with great thought about the clouds revelation?” [18] Later that month, he was stronger with members,

Those who receive the testimonies will rise, those who reject will decline. The turning point for humanity is coming at this time. Those who support the revelation will rise, those who reject will become fertilizer for the future... This is the time of Black and White. No gray area. This is a very important and very dangerous time ...

Only truth from God and the spirit world can be the root. You must connect these substantial roots to earth... The written resolution was sent out by the spirit world. If you think that this is just an announcement you will miss everything. [19]

The same month, Mrs. Moon conducted a 12-city North America Speaking Tour during which she claimed, “In our capacity as the True Parents of humanity, my husband and I, have already unified the entire spirit world.” [20] She likewise testified to “messages of support and unity” from the religious founders, their disciples, and communist leaders. Selections from “A Cloud of Witnesses” were read at each of the tour stops.

On July 30, 2002, ACLC’s National Executive Committee issued a neutral statement, “Regarding the ‘Cloud of Witnesses’ Ad of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification International.” The bulk of the statement affirmed its identity as a “broad-based” but emphatically Christian “interdenominational and interracial coalition of ministers.” At the same time, it upheld ACLC’s firm belief “that it can interact and interface with world religions without asking a minister to compromise his/her denominational beliefs.” It further affirmed “the right of every religion to state and promote its teachings, convictions and doctrine in the manner, form and forum it deems appropriate and necessary.” The statement concluded,

Therefore, ACLC takes no position, makes no comment and renders no judgment on the recent publication of an advertisement of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification/Unification Church entitled “A Cloud of Witnesses.”

The ACLC believes that it can demonstrate a profound respect for the spiritual leader of the Unification Church, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, while being true to the ACLC position that remains open and respectful of all faiths and peoples. [21]

This was lukewarm support at best.

The movement, “in conjunction with Christian scholars, pastors and theologians,” released a “Clarification of Terminology Used in ‘A Cloud of Witnesses: The Saints’ Testimonies’” on August 23. This was a more carefully crafted document that adhered to canons of theological apologetics. As such, it initially attempted to establish areas of agreement. It pointed out, “The Bible makes clear that life does not cease with the death of the flesh” and “Indeed, most major religions hold the concept that a person’s soul continues on after his or her physical body passes away.” It cited Acts 2:17-21 to the effect that God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh and show wonders in the heavens and on the earth. It also pointed out that there was no consensus but rather significant divisiveness over the doctrine of the Second Coming.

Having established several areas of agreement, the clarification document asserted there was nothing in “A Cloud of Witnesses” that detracted in any way from Jesus. It stated,

The testimonies... describe how leaders of diverse denominations and religions, even atheists, are ... humbling themselves before the one true God and Jesus’ work at the Second Coming...

Above all, this is a testimony to the work of Jesus at the Second Coming of Christ. Jesus’ supreme sacrifice at Calvary and the atoning blood of the cross grants us the redemption of sins. His resurrection was victory over death, hell, sin and the grave for all eternity. Of this there is no dispute... These testimonies affirm that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, Messiah, and the Savior of humankind. [22]

If this was so, the task was to clarify the relationship between Jesus and the one whom, in the testimony of the saints, “Jesus has anointed his representative on earth to fulfill the mission of the Second Coming,” i.e. the Rev. Sun Myung Moon. The first thing

to be said, according to the clarification document, was that “they are not rivals!” In fact, the document cites the testimony of the saints in maintaining that they are “one,” that there is “no gap,” and that “They are of one heart and mind to do the Father’s will.”

In the end, the document came to a theological conclusion akin to what was asserted during the “We Will Stand” 50-state tour, namely, “Jesus anointed Rev. and Mrs. Moon as the True Parents of humanity to complete the work of restoration at the Second Advent by establishing true families as God’s dwelling places.” [23] FFWPU encouraged “everyone to freely distribute ‘Clouds’ as much as they like to all major religious leaders” but said “it MUST be distributed with the ‘Clarification of Terminology’ in order to give readers a context in which to understand the contents.” [24]

Theological clarifications rarely stifle conflicts on the ground and controversy over “A Cloud of Witnesses” was no exception. Michael Jenkins, President of the Unification Church in America and an ACLC leader, stated, “When we were directed to proclaim the revelations of Jesus and the saints... [i]t looked as if, for the first few months, that all the key ACLC ministers would just collapse and fall away.” [25] He later wrote,

[I]t created an incredible trial for those very Christian leaders who were strongly advocating Father Moon's role in history and the power of the Blessing of Marriage. Whole congregations turned against their pastors and huge numbers of pastors, who just weeks before, were boldly proclaiming the "anointing" of the "messiah" on the stage and throughout America, now proclaimed that they "never knew him." [26]

Chicago was the epicenter of struggle. There, FFWPU had established the most substantial ties with clergy and maintained a longstanding monthly prayer breakfast tradition. At the July 2002 breakfast, Pastor T.L. Barrett, ACLC’s national co-convener, “was attacked vehemently because of the ‘Cloud of Witnesses’ article... but he encouraged everyone to pray and not just jump into conclusion.” [27] In August, “300 (mostly clergy) gathered for the regular monthly meeting” and “ministers who were upset about the ad asked to be included on the program.” According to Michael Jenkins, “they asked all the difficult questions. It was definitely challenging.” However, Jenkins called on members to “be bold and strong.” The “Clouds” testimony, he said, “is causing the ministers to leap forward in faith.” He cited the Chicago ACLC co-convener, who testified,

Nothing has changed. Jesus is in the movement. We are blessing families and churches are focusing on marriage and family because of Father Moon. I have become stronger after the ad. [28]

Attendance at the September prayer breakfast was down, but a local member commented, “It was pretty amazing because after holding such one challenging breakfast meeting last month... we could hardly believe that there are still a lot of righteous pastors/ministers out there who want to make a stand.” [29]

Managing strain

In actuality, the “Cloud of Witnesses” controversy was not as devastating as feared and even conferred several important benefits. This was the case for several reasons. First, the movement moved quickly and proactively through its consultation with Christian leaders and “Clarification of Terminology” document. Michael Jenkins reported,

The introduction that our special committee has done was the foundation upon which... clergy could accept and... proclaim the clouds as true. Once they understand from a deeper Biblical perspective... the ministers can change...

I’ve read the intro and discussed it paragraph by paragraph with all the key ACLC Executive Committee members... each one of them have completely changed when they were thus educated. [30]

A second reason the controversy was not as devastating as feared derived, naturally enough, from the “Clouds” motif. “Clouds” quite literally blow over. The ad’s coverage was widespread, having been purchased from leading newspapers in every state. However, its market penetration was shallow. There was no ad campaign. It was a one-time purchase. As a consequence, thousands of clergy and millions of the laity were untouched. Others waited for the “Clouds” to dissipate and then returned.

Interpersonal bonds between movement members and ACLC clergy were a third reason for the less than devastating negative impact of “Clouds.” Some relationships went back fifteen years or more. Other relationships of more recent vintage solidified during the ACLC trip to Korea or the 50-state “We Will Stand” revival tour. It also was the case that numerous ACLC clergy

and many more who attended ACLC or movement functions participated for a variety of non-theological reasons. Some, such as the Chicago co-convenor, resonated with ACLC's emphasis on marriage and family. Others appreciated Rev. Moon's efforts to break down denominational barriers and promote racial reconciliation. Still others enjoyed the fellowship, the service and attention of Unification missionaries, especially Japanese sisters, or the opportunity to participate in grand events at attractive venues. All of these folk were willing to tolerate the momentary dissonance of listening to spirit world messages in exchange for perceived benefits.

In fact, it was the Unification movement, specifically Rev. Moon, who pushed to keep the "Clouds" testimony alive. Beginning in October 2002, the movement began holding "Resolution rallies" for the purpose of inviting contacts, both ACLC clergy and Ambassadors for Peace, to ratify the resolutions affirmed by saints in the spirit world. These were eclectic gatherings both in the invited guests and meeting content. They typically included an educational seminar focused on world peace with representatives of Unification-related organizations such as the International and Interreligious Federation for World Peace (IIFWP) and the World Alliance of Non-Government Organizations (WANGO) reporting on their global initiatives. There were PowerPoint presentations and videos. Lunch or dinner programs included testimonies, usually of local hands-on peace work, and entertainment. After meals, readers introduced selections from "A Cloud of Witnesses," renamed in some venues "Inspirations from Heaven" or "The Dawning of the Culture of Peace—Testimonies of Jesus and the Saints." These were followed by "Clarification of Terminology" explanations; a rousing introduction to Rev. Moon's role by one of ACLC's gifted preachers, often George Augustus Stallings; an exhortation to sign the resolution; and the appointment of new ambassadors for peace. In some locations, designated representatives of the major faith traditions offered testimony and signed the resolution first, presumably making it easier for others to sign. The number of signees was not usually specified in movement accounts. However, in New Jersey, out of a gathering of 120 pastors, civic leaders, educators, and business people, it was reported that "more than half the participants responded by signing." [31]

Why the Unification movement continued to press the "A Cloud of Witnesses" testimony requires explanation, especially when its leaders seemed to do whatever they could to bury it within seminars on world peace. Essentially, the movement believed, "peace cannot come unless we know the reality of the Spirit World." As Michael Jenkins put it,

Why can't there be peace between the races? The reality is that if we don't untangle the pain and frustration found in the spirit world we will not be able to bring harmony among peoples ... we are not just dealing with enmity or conflict only between contemporaries but we represent history and must realize that the conflicts we see now are rooted in our ancestors. [32]

This, of course, was a variation on the dictum that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against... spiritual forces... in the heavenly realms." [33] However, there was something else also at work.

Unification theology taught that the Lord of the Second Advent (LSA), representing Christianity, "will also play the role of the central figure whom all other religions await." [34] It also taught that the LSA must be recognized and establish "God's sovereignty on the earth," that is the Kingdom of Heaven or, in current Unification terms, *Cheon Il Guk*, through "the will of the people." [35] Given these premises, the necessity of having the religious founders' proclamation of support for Rev. Moon ratified by the world's people made sense.

The most important benefit conferred by the "A Cloud of Witnesses" controversy was the further winnowing of ACLC clergy. ACLC had not distinguished itself in its initial lukewarm statement of neutrality on the testimonies. However, its pastors played an important role in the "Clarification of Terminology" document, and many also rallied to support Mrs. Moon's 12-City North American tour. Importantly, ACLC clergy played a major role in ongoing Interreligious and International Blessing and Marriage Rededication Ceremonies. In addition, the movement convened three "National Ministers' Workshops" at Ocean City, Maryland, Chicago and Los Angeles for more than 360 clergy during the final months of 2002. These were for the purpose of providing them with a more in-depth understanding of Unification teaching and movement activities. Michael Jenkins stated, "The trial of the Cloud of Witnesses led to a *Divine Principle* movement within the clergy." [36] All that had transpired to this point, the speaking tours, blessings, "A Cloud of Witnesses," and now the clergy workshops were stepping stones in developing a solid cadre of faith leaders willing to support Rev. Moon's Second Advent ministry.

Fruits of this effort were on display at a "True Family Values Awards Banquet" held in Chicago, December 14, 2002. 1500 clergy, including 152 who had just finished a three-day *Divine Principle* workshop, welcomed Rev. and Mrs. Moon. Jenkins commented,

Some pastors who love Father and Mother have been deeply struggling and groaning in travail. We must embrace them and love them. This is the victory. I saw scores of ministers at the banquet who stated when they heard "A Cloud of Witnesses" that they would never

work with us again. However, they can feel Jesus spirit with True Parents and the ACLC. They can't leave. They came back, both to the Divine Principle seminar and to the banquet. [37]

Rev. Jesse Edwards spoke for many when he said, "The challenges that I've had to stay with ACLC and follow Father Moon isn't with the controversy or the difficulty with my denomination. It's not the difficulty I've had with my family or my congregation. The challenge is to be obedient to God." [38]

However, Rev. Moon did not make it easy. As was his wont at otherwise feel-good events, he confronted banquet guests with blunt departures from his prepared remarks which, at times, according to Jenkins, "seemed as if the final judgment of the Bible was unleashed." He noted,

At many moments throughout Father's free flowing address the audience was stunned, shocked, overwhelmed, flabbergasted and even challenged to their heart. Father said strongly, "If you don't want to hear me, feel free, the door is right there." Yet the clergy stayed. [39]

Jenkins later wrote, "In Chicago, Father unloaded everything and anything he wanted to say. After he saw that they wouldn't run away he proclaimed, "When I look at you I feel real hope for America." [40] Jenkins continued, "Now as the Clergy and Blessed Families stand strong to fight for the Ownership of *Cheon Il Guk*, we are participating in the birth of one Unified Nation for Cosmic Peace." [41] Yet clergy resolve was soon tested by a further messianic intrusion.

From the Cross to a Crown

In February 2003, Rev. Moon issued a call for American clergy to take down the cross from their churches. This call was rooted in the Unification doctrine of salvation and Rev. Moon's conviction that the "era of the cross" was passing. He also viewed the cross as an impediment to reconciliation between Christians and Judaism, which he considered a providential necessity. He envisioned a vanguard Christian clergy who had gone "beyond the cross" journeying to the Holy Land and reconciling with a like number of Jewish rabbis. Reconciliation was a noble objective. However, coming on the heels of the "A Cloud of Witnesses" controversy, his call for clergy to remove crosses generated new strains that needed to be managed.

Rev. Moon had long taught that Jesus' crucifixion was contrary to the will of God. *Divine Principle* refers to "The Limit of Salvation through Redemption by the Cross." It states,

[T]he cross has not entirely purged us of our original sin. It has not restored us to the unfallen state of perfected original nature in which we would never commit sin, and it has not enabled us to establish the kingdom of Heaven on earth. [42]

The cross in Unification theology was a secondary providence, and the era of the cross, during which humankind continued to labor under the burden of sin, needed to conclude. Given this perspective, it made sense that the symbol of the cross also be transcended. However, it was one thing to draw a conclusion within the context of theological discourse and another to issue an iconoclastic call in real time.

Several specific occurrences preceded Rev. Moon's "Take down the Cross" initiative. The most dramatic occurred at Unification Theological Seminary, Barrytown, New York, in 2001. As described by seminary president Tyler Hendricks,

On the evening of June 11, there was a thunderstorm in the mid-Hudson Valley. A bolt of lightning struck the five-foot high stone cross that has stood at the top of our Seminary for its 70 years of existence. The cross is not grounded, so the energy had no place to go but out horizontally. This snapped the cross at its base, separating it from the building, and blew off both arms. One arm fell with the pillar of the cross backwards onto the roof. The other careened forward, with pieces falling upon building parapets and to the ground as far as 60 feet away. No one was hurt, but one car suffered damage.

As a symbol of Christ's suffering and salvific love for all humankind, the cross is heroic and magnificent. But as a symbol of humankind's malice toward God expressed by crucifying His son, the cross induces pain and sorrowful grief to God. While a symbol of God's victory, it is also a symbol of human sin. In 1974, Father Moon directed that the cross remain atop our Seminary. Upon hearing of its demise this June, he said that it is now time for all crosses to come down. [43]

However, at that time, the movement took no action.

Nearly a year later, at the 20th anniversary banquet of *The Washington Times* on May 21, 2002, Rev. Moon delivered a fiery speech, “The Life of Jesus as Seen from God’s Will, and God’s Warning to the Present Age, the Period of the Last Days.” Apart from raising eyebrows among journalists who were not accustomed to theological orations, Rev. Moon was unequivocal in his position on the crucifixion. He stated,

I want to make one declaration to you here today. The crucifixion was not God's victory. Instead, it was Satan's victory... Christians for the past two thousand years have believed in Christianity without knowing that it came into existence not by the principle of the cross, but by the principle of the resurrection...

Christianity and Judaism should realize even now that the Lord, who tried to demolish Satan's nation and do away with Satan's kingship, and to accomplish God's will and restore humanity, died a tragic death. When they realize this, they should repent and become one. [44]

This speech planted seeds but, again, resulted in no action.

A third preceding event came from an unlikely quarter. A 70-year-old Buddhist nun associated with the Korean Unification movement “received a revelation from Jesus” in early August 2002, “instructing her to take down the crucifixes hung in Christian churches.” Afterwards, “together with followers from the Buddhist temple, Christian believers and Unification Church members, she held a service for taking down the crosses.” According to FFWPU International President Sun-jo Hwang, who received this report, when Rev. Moon heard the news, “he said that the nun was the kindling necessary to light a fire.” [45]

Cross Removals

The movement was still in the midst of turmoil resulting from publication of “A Cloud of Witnesses,” yet Rev. Moon implemented a test case. He reportedly told Archbishop George Augustus Stallings, founder of the Amani Temple in Washington, D.C., to remove the cross from his church before the end of 2002. Stallings had been a stout defender of the movement during the “Clouds” controversy. He preferred to wait, but finally decided to comply. As recounted by Michael Jenkins,

[H]e stood up right before midnight on God’s Day [New Year’s], with a wrench, on his own ladder, and he’s taking the cross off the wall. The members are coming in for the midnight prayer and they go, “What are you doing?!” He replies, “What does it look like I’m doing? I’m taking this cross off the wall.” ...

Peter Kim [Rev. Moon’s personal assistant] asked him, “What did you do with the cross?” He replied, “I hid it in a room, because if the members find it, they’ll crucify me on it.” [46]

Stallings’ report induced a good deal of levity, but the incident was significant in demonstrating to Rev. Moon that ACLC clergy would be responsive.

The “Take Down the Cross” initiative crystallized in early 2003. In February, Rev. Moon asked movement and ACLC leaders to educate 10,000, later upped to 12,000, Christian leaders in Unification theology. The movement fell far short of that but had convened workshops for 1200 or so by the end of March. At the beginning of that month, Rev. Moon called upon clergy to remove crosses from their churches. As he put it,

The sooner we take down the crosses, the sooner the Second Israel will rise to take ownership of its role... You must build a... movement to take down the cross and lift up the resurrection of Jesus. [47]

However, it wasn’t clear how the pastors would respond. Following a New Jersey seminar, Michael Jenkins reported, “To our surprise, we found that many clergy... have been prepared to go beyond the cross.” [48] This was far from being the case elsewhere. In Chicago, during a four-day workshop for 200 clergy, it was reported, “The tension and confusion that arose during the panel discussion about the Cross and the meaning of Salvation really caused a stir... The majority was not ready to bring down their crosses.” At a Los Angeles “Tear down the Walls” workshop, only 17 out of 126 pastors signed a statement to take down the cross. [49]

The movement's goal was "that on Good Friday [April 18, 2003] 120 ACLC clergy nationwide will have a public ceremony (with the press) to take down the cross." [50] In the end, that goal was met. Michael Jenkins reported,

A truly profound moment in history has occurred. 123 clergy took down their crosses over the Easter weekend. This was supported by another 135 clergy who attended services participating and in accord with this dispensation. All told, 258 clergy directly affirmed the taking down of the cross proclaiming an end the era of bloodshed and sacrifice and the beginning of a new era of faith and resurrection.

[51]

Unification News reported on "Take Down the Cross" services in Oregon, New Jersey, Chicago, Los Angeles, Maryland, Texas, Washington, D.C., New York, Boston, Atlanta, Florida, Virginia, and San Diego. Part of the justification for removing the crosses was historical. According to an "Affirmation" of supportive ACLC clergy,

The early Christians chose the fish as their symbol. In the Catacombs, where the vestiges of the first 3 centuries of Christian worship remain, no cross can be found. The cross was the Roman instrument of punishment for the lowliest of criminals. To early believers it represented the tragedy of Christ's rejection, and the power of evil embodied in those who crucified him...

The cross became a Christian symbol only in the fourth century after Christ, when the Roman emperor Constantine placed the sign of the cross on the shields of his soldiers to achieve victory in battle. It thus became a symbol of Christian conquest, even as he wedded the church to the power of the state. Tragically, through a history of inquisitions, forced conversions, and anti-Semitic pogroms, this symbol that to us represents the love of God has signified intolerance and hatred to Jews, Moslems, and people of other faiths. A burning cross was the symbol of racial hatred and fear in our own nation's too-recent past...

We shall no longer glorify the tragedy of our faithlessness nor revere the instrument of his death. [52]

A number of clergy referenced the "The Old Rugged Cross," a hymn that referred to the symbol as an emblem of suffering and shame. [53]

However, the tone of services was not negative. Clergy and their congregations, many of which were the smaller storefront variety, were not simply doing away with the cross. They were, as "The Old Rugged Cross" suggested, exchanging it "for a crown!" There was a good deal of crown ceremonial in the services including crown lapel pins, literal crowns on display or donned by pastors, framed photos of crowns (one church unveiled a full color high gloss 4' by 3' photo under hands folded in prayer and doves of peace), and biblical references to crowns especially I Peter 5:4 which foretold, "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." ACLC leaders prepared a service liturgy that included Jesus' "Seven Last Words," traditionally the seven phrases he uttered from the cross, and a concluding procession during which congregants exchanged their palm crosses for crowns. One congregation had congregants use red pens to write their burdens on individual cardboard crosses, the red ink symbolizing Jesus' blood, which they then exchanged for crowns. Supportive clergy, some of whom may not have been able to conduct the ceremony in their own churches or had promised to do so in the future, attended many of the services.

In all of this, the movement pursued a dangerous path. The purpose of the "Take Down the Cross" services was to unify the first and second Israel, Judaism and Christianity. However, it ran the risk of alienating both. In a *Unification News* lead article that covered pastors who removed crosses from their churches, Michael Jenkins wrote,

They are standing together with a profound understanding that the Cross must come down because it represents a secondary course that Jesus had to walk... due to the failure of the chosen people to receive him 2000 years ago. [54]

In a single sentence, Jenkins succeeded in denigrating the central Christian symbol and the Jewish people. However, it wasn't just Michael Jenkins, who on numerous occasions showed himself to be the movement's most empathetic and effective ambassador to both the Christian and Jewish communities. It was the theology itself. The movement was attempting to pour "new wine into old wineskins." This was problematic, particularly when its "new truth" played out in public acts such as Christian clergy removing crosses from churches.

One unfortunate incident occurred in Worcester, Massachusetts where a local pastor had "an incredible understanding and

experience” during an ACLC Minister’s Workshop in Ocean City, New Jersey. Determined to remove the cross, he preached a Good Friday sermon, repenting for placing the symbol of Satan’s victory in the Church. This was marginally within the bounds of an acceptable service. However, on removing the cross from the sanctuary, he and a companion pastor took it outside the church and threw it into a garbage dumpster. [55] Inexplicably, the FFWPU website ran a photo of the act until decision-makers were informed of its incendiary potential.

Subsequently, *Christian News Service* ran objections from a representative of Concerned Women for America, a biblically based, public policy women’s organization, who stated,

If a Christian objected to a Star of David or a Crescent, we would know that person is a bigot. When a Jew or Muslim objects to the display of the cross by Christians, we know the same thing about that person... To tear down our religious symbols, to uproot our traditions is not the way to reconciliation, but rather, to recognize with respect, our own and the traditions of others is the way to true reconciliation... Reconciliation and peace do not grow out of intolerance. [56]

Phillip Schanker, FFWPU’s Public Affairs Director, responded in the same article,

I’m sure, for some narrow-minded Christians, it seems like we’re undermining or denying the very foundations of Christian belief. Not at all; nobody is questioning the Jesus’ salvific role or sacrificial position... But we’re recognizing from within New Testament understanding that Jesus transcended the cross. Let’s not continue crucifying him. That’s not where he is. [57]

Jesus may have transcended the cross, but UM coalition partners required additional verification that the “Cross to Crown” initiative was on course. The UM provided this by sponsoring its first pilgrimage to the Holy Land. For Rev. Moon, there was still unfinished business in Jerusalem.

Reconciling with Judaism

Acknowledging that the era of the cross had passed and removing their crosses was only the first step that Rev. Moon envisioned for ACLC clergy. On that foundation, he requested that this “resurrected body” of clergy, “travel to Jerusalem and have a conference in which the second Israel. Having repented and removed the barriers between itself and the first Israel, [they] will humbly ask them to lift up Jesus as the Lord that Israel was to receive.” [58] He also instructed clergy to “Bury the cross in Golgotha where Jesus was crucified.” [59] These actions, he said, would open the way for reconciliation among Jews, Christians and Muslims.

This was another tall order. Burying the cross as a symbolic act was certainly doable. However, arranging for a conference with rabbis and Jewish leaders who, on the basis of ministers removing their crosses, would likewise repent and uplift Jesus was a challenging prospect to put it mildly. In addition, movement leaders and ACLC clergy undertook the pilgrimage after the start of the second Iraq war and at the height of the Second Intifada. Hotels in Israel were empty of overseas tourists and suicide bombings were increasingly frequent. In this respect, their mission was life-threatening.

The first Middle East Peace Initiative (MEPI) pilgrimage, as it was known, took place from May 12-19, 2003. It included 131 clergy who removed crosses from their churches the previous Good Friday and movement support staff. They traveled first to Rome, and then to Israel, arriving on May 15. Their two major purposes were to bury the cross and reconcile, at least symbolically, with Jewish brethren. In addition, they visited holy and historical sites at both locations: the Circus Maximus and dungeon where Peter and Paul traditionally had been kept in Rome; the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, Mount of the Beatitudes, Gethsemane and Qumran caves among other locations in Israel. However, May 18 was the key day. Clergy awoke early and left the Hyatt Regency in busses at 5:30 a.m. to go to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It was fortunate they left at this time because at 6:00 a.m. a suicide bomber set off a blast two blocks from the hotel which killed seven persons and injured twenty-two. All traffic was stopped and had the clergy left any later they would not have been able to move.

Rev. Moon said to bury the cross at Golgotha where Jesus was crucified. However, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was built over the site, its floors were all marble, and it was impossible to dig. Clergy, therefore, offered a 30-minute “symbolical service” at the tomb of Jesus, “put a small cross there, and covered it with the FFWPU flag.” [60] Then, the clergy traveled a mile or so away to the Potter’s Field, also referred to as the Field of Blood, which, according to Matthew 27, the chief priests purchased as a grave for foreigners with the 30 pieces of silver Judas got for betraying Jesus. Pastors lifted a wooden cross, about six feet high, as they marched down a winding road to the Potter’s Field. At the site, ministers placed the cross in a hole previously dug to its exact dimensions by Israeli FFWPU members. They placed a FFWPU flag, “dated and signed by representative leaders,”

on top. [61] The service included a Bible reading and prayers by a rabbi, minister and Unificationist representing the first, second and third Israel. The ceremony concluded with participants putting “soil on the cross one-by-one, repenting for the false faith” that was “preventing Christianity and Judaism from bringing reconciliation.” [62]

The make-or-break part of the trip, a “Conference for Jewish and Christian Reconciliation and Harmony,” followed beginning at 10:00 a.m. Dr. Frank Kaufmann, a longtime FFWPU interfaith leader, arrived ten days in advance of the clergy delegation to assist Israeli FFWPU personnel in preparing the Jewish side. As he saw it,

Potential for disaster was significant, even likely... [The] mission would not have even a remote possibility of success had not these clergymen and women taken their crosses down from their churches before presenting themselves to their Jewish brothers and sisters in repentance. [63]

According to Kaufmann, the “trickiest part” of the program “was that all people from both sides of the reconciliation effort would have to repent publicly for their past failures as stewards of God’s providence.” To him, the likelihood of achieving Jewish repentance “seemed as remote as a distant star.” In his words,

We could not find our way around the simple and unbearable fact that for two thousand years the Jews have been tortured, killed, and hideously persecuted in the name of Jesus. How on earth could they be asked to repent for anything remotely connected to the dominant source of their unspeakable suffering for millennia? [64]

Nevertheless, Kaufmann and the national Israeli FFWPU leader Hod Ben Zvi visited “cornerstone Jewish leaders whose decisions would make or break the condition of reconciliation.” [65] Fortunately, there were several who had attended IIFWP international programs and who were concerned with issues of reconciliation between faiths. As a result, they were able to assemble 120 rabbis and Jewish leaders for the conference.

The situation was still extraordinarily sensitive. According to Kaufmann, success hinged on “key representative figures from each believing community,” Archbishop George Augustus Stallings from the Christian side and the Chief Rabbi of Ramat Gan, Itzhak Bar Dea. The morning session began, appropriately enough, with the theme of “Forgiveness, Love and Reconciliation.” Rabbi Bar Dea welcomed his Christian “younger brothers” and commended Christianity for “spreading monotheism throughout the world.” [66] He also was “extremely respectful and embracing of the ten sheikhs and imams who attended.” [67] Archbishop Stallings also spoke. As recounted by Michael Jenkins,

The Archbishop walked a very narrow road of inspiring the Christian leaders who were there, while at the same time inspiring the Jewish leaders to set aside our differences and come together... [He] stepped out of the box and said we as Christians have not understood the meaning of the cross. Therefore, to set a condition for reconciliation we took our crosses down and came to Israel with a humble heart seeking our elder brother. He also said that we Christians must repent for the Holocaust and for all the anti-Semitism that occurred throughout history. He called upon the rabbis there to please forgive us.

At the same time he also called on the rabbis to really understand that Jesus wanted to be loved by his people, that he was sent by God to build the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and if there could have been understanding at that time, the kingdom would have come. Therefore, if understanding can be fostered at this time concerning Jesus and Christianity and Israel, then the Kingdom of God can be expanded upon the earth. The anointing of Archbishop Stallings was profound... [He] succeeded... and the whole atmosphere was transformed. [68]

One of Stallings’ tasks was to uplift Jesus in such a way that Jewish participants would not feel “pressure,” given the long history of Christian efforts at conversion.

Dr. Andrew Wilson, a scripture professor at Unification Theological Seminary and himself a Jewish Unificationist, continued in the same vein after lunch. In his presentation, “Removing the Curse of the Cross: Towards a New Relationship between Judaism and Christianity,” Wilson drew on material from Catholic author James Carroll’s best-selling *Constantine’s Sword: The Church and the Jews* (2001), a damning portrayal of Christian anti-Semitism. However, the burden of his remarks was to encourage those present “to reconsider the life of the greatest Jew who ever lived.” He cited Maimonides who recognized Jesus as “the greatest son of Judaism, the world teacher who brought light and a great civilizing and spiritual influence to the entire world.”

According to Wilson,

The Jewish “No” to Jesus is the obverse of the Christian cross. It is the perpetuation of a vulgar human conflict from the first century C.E. involving people of dubious merit. Those who condemned Jesus were not the great lights of Judaism... but quislings like the high priest Caiaphas... Yet their unconsidered judgment became hardened and fixed as a perpetual religious attitude. Most Christians today recognize that it is illegitimate to hold all Jews responsible for the actions of a few self-interested and corrupt leaders 2,000 years ago... By the same token, Jews today need not feel bound to follow those same leaders in their condemnation. [69]

Wilson proposed that Jews “take seriously the messianic claim for Jesus” the way Muslims have, “in their own terms.” He called on them to “appropriate Jesus using the resources of Jewish tradition” and to appreciate “Rabbi Jesus,” as a number of Jewish scholars already have, “a teacher with a profound understanding of the Torah and a practitioner of *tikkun*.” [70]

Participants fleshed out this content and more in small groups throughout the day. However, the test came at the end of the proceedings when Archbishop Stallings presented the “Jerusalem Declaration” for signing. This document, labored over by Kaufmann, Wilson, Jenkins, Stallings, Ben Zvi and others, was to be proof-positive of repentance and intended reconciliation on both sides. The declaration stated, “believers from both families... wish to repent for the dark parts of our past, and seek a bright future together.” The two key articles read,

We Christian believers have celebrated what was actually the moment of G-d’s greatest sorrow by glorifying the execution which ended Jesus’ physical life, shattered the dream and promise of the prophets, and blocked the coming of G-d’s Kingdom for 2000 years. During this time we have too many times failed to embody the love of Jesus, and instead perpetrated a history of Anti-Semitism. For this we truly repent.

We Jews, chosen by G-d as a people, wish to open our hearts to G-d to see ancient events with His eyes, and liberate ourselves once and for all from the burden of Jesus’ crucifixion. This simple and innocent Jewish young man Yeshua, whom G-d loved and in whom He placed His hopes and dreams, was betrayed by the rich and powerful among his own people, who for the sake of their status and comfort turned him over to executioners of hateful foreign powers. For this we truly repent. [71]

The document also affirmed “the courageous and sacrificial work of Reverend and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon to bring our families of faith together” and concluded, “We will make one family of G-d with the Blessing of True Parents, establish our own ideal families according to your eternal teaching, and create a new world of justice, peace, and true love.” [72]

There was a moment of high tension when the declaration was presented. As Frank Kaufmann described it,

The declaration was read slowly, clearly, and without drama, emotion, or expectation... translated completely, fully, and directly. As such the... reading was one of the most dramatic and frightening moments of my life. It had come to the point where the single most difficult change in the history of religion was playing out before our eyes. The time slowed down to a crawl. My heart ripped through my chest for what felt like hours.

I removed myself from any distraction or conversation. I stood in an inaccessible place in the hall, and just looked, listened, and prayed. After the reading the Archbishop, assuming nothing, turned and asked if the Rabbi would sign this joint declaration of repentance, and make a new beginning together with him. [73]

According to one report, “the main rabbi strongly rejected... signing his name.” In addition, “Some rabbis were upset that the declaration would even be considered.” However, in an unscripted moment that validated the Unification position that unity between the first and second Israel would lead to broader reconciliation, Rabbi Bar Dea replied, “I will sign it if my Moslem brother will sign it with me.” [74] A leading sheik marched forward and “the three brothers collapsed into an embrace.” [75] Michael Jenkins recounted, “This opened the floodgates and everyone rushed to the front to sign.” [76] Frank Kaufmann commented,

The heavens and the spiritual world opened like a cloudburst, literally raining on all present. The document glistened golden under the passing of the pen one to another. People stood as if in a downpour after a drought, reveling in the end of a curse, and the promise of

Unificationists clearly were not given to understatement. Nevertheless, it was a great moment. A banquet concluded the occasion. Michael Jenkins reported, “The Holy Spirit touched everyone. People didn’t want to leave. People were overwhelmed. A great blessing of God had occurred and the anointing was upon us. We stayed for 2 hours afterward.” [78] Returning clergy and movement leaders presented the declaration to Rev. Moon who added his signature.

Managing Strain

In the end, the call to remove crosses was not damaging to the UM’s ministerial coalition for many of the same reasons that the “A Cloud of Witnesses” controversy was not damaging. Importantly, the UM moved quickly and proactively to link its take down the cross call to the Middle East Peace Initiative (MEPI). Over the next two years, more than 10,000 religious leaders, civic officials, NGO leaders, professionals, and UM members from throughout the world participated in pilgrimages to the Holy Land as the movement made it a focus of activity. During the initial pilgrimage and the next several tours, clergy were at the vanguard pursuing MEPI objectives in highly dramatic, sometimes life-risking ways. MEPI pilgrims initiated interfaith peace marches of Jews, Christians and Muslims through the Old City of Jerusalem; became the first interfaith group since the Second Intifada to obtain entrance to the Islamic sector of the Temple Mount; conducted high-risk forays into Gaza; and brought Muslims, Jews and Christians together for “Heart-to Heart” rallies in Jerusalem’s Independence Park.

Second, the call to take down crosses, like the “A Cloud of Witnesses” statement, was a stand-alone, one-off event. UM leaders did not repeat the call and allowed it to quietly drop, superseded by pilgrimages to the Holy Land which took on a life of their own. The UM convened a symposium on “Rethinking the Viability of the Cross as a Central Christian Symbol” at Union Theological Seminary in November 2003 and educational sessions during the pilgrimages referenced the history of Christian anti-Semitism and related matters. However, leadership did not advocate taking down crosses. This was a one-time “condition” that gave birth to a wider movement. According to Michael Jenkins,

Only a small number is needed to fulfill this condition, but it must be fulfilled. This condition will allow for a transformation of the culture of war that now exists in the Middle East. On this basis the Moslem family can be liberated from their pain, and massive reconciliation will occur. [79]

The MEPI focus increasingly shifted from Christian-Jewish reconciliation to Christian-Jewish-Muslim reconciliation. Interreligious peacebuilding emerged as the dominant theme.

Third, as with the “Clouds” statement, interpersonal bonds between the UM and clergy were decisive. The pilgrimages to the Holy Land afforded the opportunity for existing bonds to be strengthened but for new relationships to be formed. The UM, in fact, significantly extended its reach into not only the ministerial community but also among civic officials, NGO leaders, and professionals who joined tours. The UM designated them “Ambassadors for Peace.” MEPI broadened to include conferences, briefings, service projects, soccer competitions, and cultural events in the Middle East and elsewhere. It introduced symposia on such topics as “Considering the Root Causes of Conflict and Forging a Lasting Path to Peace” or “Innovative Approaches to Lasting Peace and Stability in the Middle East.” In this way, MEPI activated and reinvigorated a number of UM-related organizations, introduced new supporters and a significant number of key leaders to the movement.

However, MEPI was not immune to messianic intrusions. On December 22, 2003, MEPI sponsored a large rally at Jerusalem’s Independence Park which included “a coronation ceremony for Jesus.” This was a step beyond repentance embraced at the conference of rabbis and clergy. For Unificationists, it was a condition that “the chosen people of Israel embraced and welcomed Jesus and crowned him as the King of Peace,” an action that “reversed all that occurred 2000 years ago.” [80] Michael Jenkins, the event’s master of ceremonies, proclaimed, “The rejection of Jesus is restored and He is honored as king of peace, welcomed by the Jewish people and embraced and loved as the Lord.” [81] After two Jewish representatives presented the crown, two Muslims presented a golden menorah to a Jewish professor as a symbol of reconciliation with the Jews. After that, Christian leaders presented a robe to a Muslim representative as a Christian affirmation that Muhammad is God’s prophet. Michael Jenkins continued, “Jesus, Moses and Muhammad are one. The era of conversion is over and the Era of the Peace Kingdom is now realized.” [82] Whether or not these symbolic acts inaugurated a new era, the December 22, 2003 rally launched a series of coronations that would test coalition resolve.

Peace King Coronations

The crowning of Jesus in Jerusalem was the first of six major “Peace King” coronations, also referred to as “crown of peace” ceremonies, held from 2003-05. The second was a repeat coronation of Jesus in Washington, D.C. on February 4, 2004, at which time crowns also were presented to Rev. and Mrs. Moon as represented by their eldest living son, Hyun Jin and his wife. A third crown of peace coronation of Rev. and Mrs. Moon, this time present and in royal regalia at the Dirksen Senate Office Building on March 23, 2004, sparked controversy once it became public. The movement conducted a fourth crown of peace coronation of Rev. and Mrs. Moon in the Korean National Assembly Library on August 20, 2004. Afterwards, Rev. Moon directed that the movement conduct blessing registration and crown of peace ceremonies in forty nations and on all six continents by the end of 2004. This culminated in a fifth crown of peace ceremony in Washington, D.C., though in a hotel not a federal building, on December 13, 2004. A sixth and final crown of peace ceremony was conducted at the movement’s Cheongpyeong Heaven and Earth Training Center in Korea on February 14, 2005.

The “Peace King” or “Crown of Peace” ceremonies were for the purpose of substantiating “heavenly kingship” on earth. Heavenly Kingship was more ambiguous in Unification thinking than either its understanding of the spirit world or its theology of the cross. The movement’s orientation was unquestionably eschatological, and “Kingdom of God” language is prominent in Unification texts as well as in its devotional life. However, UM texts also extol democracy, the separation of powers and the “will of the people.” [83] As a consequence, messianic coronations generated a degree of dissonance, particularly in the American context, and there was a tendency to soft-pedal or even omit reference to them in U.S. movement publications as will be shown. This, in turn, led to something of a Korean-American divide. Whereas a major Korean leader interpreted the U.S. coronations as America surrendering to True Parents “in the king position,” American movement leaders were at pains to argue that Rev. Moon did not wish to unite church and state and that neither he nor the movement had any interest in temporal power. [84] These ambiguities complicated but did not significantly undermine the UM’s relationship with its coalition partners.

Precursors

The “Peace King” coronations followed two earlier ceremonies, “The Enthronement Ceremony for God’s Kingship” on January 13, 2001 and “The Coronation of the King of the Blessed Families” on February 6, 2003. The Enthronement Ceremony for God’s Kingship was conducted with great majesty and attended by some 6,000 core Unificationists at the UM’s Cheongpyeong Training Center. It lay the foundation for Rev. Moon’s subsequent declaration of *Cheon Il Guk* (the Nation of Cosmic Peace and Harmony). He described the coronation as “the greatest day of celebration in all human history” and stated that God’s heart had been liberated “for the first time.” On that basis, according to Rev. Moon, God “could start His new history based on the might and power of true love.” [85]

The Coronation of the King of the Blessed Families [86] was more complex, because it included not only core Unificationists but also guests. It was conducted in the main hall of *Cheonseong Wanglim* Palace (“Palace of Heavenly Presence”) at the movement’s Cheongpyeong Training Center complex in Korea. Rev. Moon previously asked the American, Japanese and Korean movements to mobilize 2,500 members each for the ceremonies and for “*Cheon Il Gul* mobilization activity” in cities and towns throughout Korea.

The UM also convened an IIFWP “World Summit on Leadership and Governance” in Seoul from February 4-7. Some two hundred leaders attended, including three Nobel Peace Prize laureates (Jose Ramos Horta from East Timor, Lech Walesa from Poland, and Betty Williams from Northern Ireland) as well several current and former heads of state, members of parliament, government and diplomatic leaders, religious leaders, professors, NGO heads and media representatives. They were bused to Cheongpyeong for the ceremony. UM leaders believed “all humankind is called to participate in this providential event.” [87] That was why, in addition to those participating in *Cheon Il Guk* mobilization activities, the movement invited representatives from each of the 185 nations in which it had missions as well as the leaders participating in the World Summit. It also invited representatives from each of the more than 200 clan associations in Korea.

For the Coronation of the King of the Blessed Families, Rev. and Mrs. Moon wore royal Korean clothing and dynastic crowns. They were preceded in the procession by a daughter-in-law carrying the royal scepter and two sons carrying the royal seal. A *honbae* or holy cup was offered to Rev. and Mrs. Moon, who sat behind a massive offering table piled high with fruits and delicacies as well as traditional Korean foods. There were bows from members representing the world’s nations and religions. Rev. Moon prayed, and there was a cutting of a celebration cake. However, additional detail regarding the coronation was sparse, particularly in the movement’s U.S.-based English language publications. *Unification News*, the UM’s primary American publication, carried no coverage of the coronation. This was likely due to sensitivity over crowning, the U.S.’s anti-monarchical origins, and its tradition of church-state separation. Leaders participating in the World Summit on Leadership and Governance undoubtedly viewed the coronation as an in-house Unification event and an opportunity to view intense religious phenomena first hand.

The Coronation of the King of the Blessed Families was closely followed by the founding of the *Cheonju Pyeonghwa Tongil Gajeong Dang*, or “Family Party for Peace and Unity” in Korea on March 10, 2003. Intended to “go in a direction fundamentally different from that of the present political culture and party politics,” Korean leaders asserted that its mission was to “truly save

our nation. [88] Again, there was no notice of the Family Party's founding in U.S.-based movement publications, just as there had been no print coverage of the coronation.

The closest *Unification News* came to mentioning the Family Party was an article by Rev. Michael Jenkins which took issue with the English translation of Rev. Moon's morning message of March 2, 2003. He pointed out that Rev. Moon was quoted as saying, "To unify Korea, we must unify church and state. We must establish a political party and then unify church and state." According to Jenkins,

This interpretation of Father's actual words gives a very misleading impression. In western political thought "unity of church and state" conveys the idea of the establishment of an official state religion. From Father's extensive commitment to dialogue and the development of interreligious conferences on peace we see that his teaching always emphasizes the Biblical theme of the prophet "advising" the king... In fact our translator... upon careful review, concluded that rendering the thought conveyed on March 2 as "unity of Church and state" would have better been expressed as "harmony between religion and politics"...

Of course, Father opposes the strict "separation of church and state" in the sense that he does not favor a completely secularized, amoral society in which religion is removed from the public square. But by no means does Father wish to "unite the church and state" in the sense of making the Unification Church or any other faith an official state religion. That's why he says the "interreligious" body should "advise" the governmental bodies of the world. [89]

Jenkins noted unity of church and state language can be "easily misused by our opponents to create trouble for our movement" and counseled, "it is important that the previous language be corrected on any public websites and that members be advised about the need for caution in speaking of the concept of the relation of religion and politics." [90] This would be easier said than done, particularly in light of subsequent coronations conducted on U.S. soil.

U.S. Coronations

Two American "Peace King" coronations were controversial, as they were conducted in U.S. government office buildings. The February 4, 2004 ceremony, originally scheduled to be conducted in the Dirksen Senate Office Building, was moved to the Reagan Office Building due a ricin poison attack unrelated to the event just 40 hours before the program. Despite the drama, Michael Jenkins' reported, "40 Congressman and 2 U.S. Senators and representatives from the Bush Administration attended." [91] However, only four were named. [92] This ceremony included a repeat coronation of Jesus. In addition, crowns also were presented to Rev. and Mrs. Moon represented by their son, Hyun Jin and his wife.

The March 23, 2004 program at the Dirksen Senate Office Building was a much more elaborately conceived affair due to the presence of Rev. and Mrs. Moon. Building on contacts established over the years through the movement-owned *Washington Times*, the host committee included six congressional co-chairs and a partial listing of the invitational committee included three additional congressmen as well as a one current and one retired U.S. senator, four state senators, a former ambassador, and well-known author Steven Covey. [93] One leader reported,

There were some 450 renowned leaders... present at the ceremony, including 25 U.S. senators or their representatives, 56 congressmen or their representatives, and 26 ambassadors to either the United Nations or to the United States. [94]

Ninety-one Ambassador for Peace awardees were present representing all 50 states. There was reconciliation ceremony between the three Abrahamic faiths, and one representative each from Jewish, Islamic and Christian traditions were given national-level awards. Several congressmen and ambassadors were given global level leadership awards.

All of this served as a backdrop to the crowning of Rev. and Mrs. Moon. Following an introduction by Congressman Danny Davis (D. Illinois), Rev. and Mrs. Moon proceeded to the front stage area, flanked by escorts from various religious traditions underneath a large portrait of the U.S. Capitol. Archbishop George Augustus Stallings and Congressman Roscoe Bartlett (R. Maryland) carried in the royal robes and, after a polite bow, offered them to Rev. and Mrs. Moon. Rev. Jesse Edwards and Congressman Davis entered with crowns and, likewise, after bows, offered them to Rev. and Mrs. Moon who were fitted by their son Hyun Jin and his wife, Jun Sook, who had represented them during the February 4th event. Following official photographs, Rev. Moon, *sans* royal attire, delivered his keynote address, "Declaring the Era of the Peace Kingdom." The bulk of his speech dealt with "true love" and family values. However, subsequent press accounts zeroed in a paragraph near the end in which he stated,

The five great saints and many other leaders in the spirit world, including even Communist leaders such as Marx and Lenin, who committed all manner of barbarity and murders on earth, and dictators such as Hitler and Stalin, have found strength in my teachings, mended their ways and been reborn as new persons... They have declared to all Heaven and Earth that Reverend Sun Myung Moon is none other than humanity's Savior, Messiah, Returning Lord and True Parent. [95]

In an unscripted moment, a Jewish rabbi, inspired by the "miracle" of Jews, Christians and Muslims coming together in reconciliation, came to the microphone and blew a shofar (ram's horn) signifying the coming of the messiah. [96]

The March 23 awards banquet was a closed event. The only press in attendance was the *Washington Times*, and its coverage was bland, noting that "several dozen religious and civic leaders were honored for their exceptional dedication as peacemakers" and that Rev. and Mrs. Moon "received Crown of Peace Awards for their lifelong public service." Its coverage of Rev. Moon's remarks was minimal, focusing entirely on his support for "God-centered families." [97] Luis Martinez, ABC News Senate correspondent, noticed a number of religious figures around the Dirksen Office Building but was told the event was closed and that he'd have to leave when he tried to enter. [98] This suggested that the movement remained sensitive about the church-state divide and that the event was primarily for internal consumption. Nevertheless, postings on Unification web sites, notably a 20-minute video showing Rev. and Mrs. Moon in maroon, Charlemagne-like robes and crown, were picked up by independent bloggers and eventually the mainstream media.

On June 23, three months after the Crown of Peace ceremony, the *Washington Post* published front page article on the banquet. It led with Rev. Moon's claims about Hitler and Stalin being "reborn" through his teachings and Rep. Danny Davis, wearing white gloves, carrying a pillow with "an ornate crown that was placed on Moon's head." [99] The *New York Times* reported on the ceremony the same day, noting, "Capitol Hill was in full-blown backpedaling mode, as lawmakers... struggled to explain themselves." It quoted Rep. Roscoe Bartlett who said, "I remember the king and queen thing... But we have the king and queen of the prom, the king and queen of 4-H, the Mardi Gras and all sorts of other things. I had no idea what he was king of." It cited others, such as Sen. Mark Dayton (D. Minnesota) who "insisted they were duped and had no idea that the organization holding the reception was connected to Mr. Moon." He said he had attended "because a constituent was being honored." [100] Others claimed not to have been there or even to have heard of the event.

At a June 30th press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., some twenty Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Native American religious leaders joined in a statement of support for Rev. and Mrs. Moon's "global peace work" and "praised the Crown of Peace Awards Ceremony." They testified to the "genuine character" of Rev. Moon's interfaith and reconciliation activities. They also denied anyone was duped into attending and produced letters of invitation clearly indicating the presence and awarding of Reverend Moon at the event. They expressed various views on "Rev. Moon's claim to have a messianic mission. Jews present characterized Rev. Moon's work of religious reconciliation as *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world) and that this hastens the messiah's coming. The consensus Christian view was that Rev. Moon had the anointing of Jesus and "was calling us all to be messiahs." [101]

The UM-related Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace (IIFWP) responded more forcefully to media criticism, charging in an official statement that it was "filled with misrepresentations, distortions and outright falsehoods." It contended that the independent journalists and blog writers who provided momentum for the story "ignore and ridicule any genuine religious motivation," and objected particularly to characterizations of Rev. Moon's religion as "bizarre." Crowns "in our society," it stated, are used "not as a symbol of political power or authority, but rather as the symbol of victory or ultimate achievement" as in the "crowning moment" of one's career. As for Rev. and Mrs. Moon's regalia, the statement noted, "Throughout the event, reconciliation ceremonies featured Jewish, Christian and Muslim clerics in ceremonial robes" and "robes and crowns were presented to honor Moses and Judaism, Jesus and Christianity, and Mohammad and Islam in similar fashion." It denied that Rev. Moon or IIFWP sought "temporal power," contextualized spirit world and messianic claims, and called for "fair and frank consideration by an unbiased media" of questions raised by the Crown of Peace Awards Ceremony "before subscribing to the 'witch hunt' that this issue has become." [102]

Prior to the coronation becoming a matter of public comment, the American movement surrendered to the inevitable, publishing a full-page photo of Rev. and Mrs. Moon in full royal regalia on the front page of the April 2004 issue of *Unification News*. In fact, there had been dissatisfaction with the February 4th occasion, specifically that Rev. and Mrs. Moon did not receive the crowns directly and their coronation was not sufficiently distinguished from other awards. This may have been one reason for the relatively quick turnaround between the February 4th and March 23rd events. One UM leader compared "outside" and "inside" views of the event. According to him,

The outside view of the Capitol Hill event was that Father received a crown, an award for his years of dedication and leadership in

The same leader noted, "This was a very emotional moment for Father because only now, after all these years of investing his blood, sweat and tears, is he beginning to see 'his' America responding." [104]

This raised an important point as to whether the public, in fact, was responding or responding in the way the movement wished. It was apparent that many if not most in the hall had no idea that a coronation was to be included in the award proceedings and many, particularly among the elected officials, distanced themselves afterwards. Furthermore, the response of the mainstream media was characterized by mocking condescension. A *New York Times* editorial referred to the event as "a bizarre self-coronation." [105] Given these reactions, when reference was made to Rev. Moon seeing "his America" responding, it really referred to the movement's membership and coalition partners, ACLC ministers who accepted Rev. and Mrs. Moon's anointing as the True Parents of humankind and a select number of similarly believing Ambassadors for Peace. As the event was closed, these *Cheon Il Guk* builders were the intended audience all along. In this respect, the objective was to establish the "Peace King" coronation in the subjective mind and memory of followers. It would have been awe-inspiring had the wider public accepted the coronation or its aftermath, but that was not really expected and probably not desired, given the movement's present state of readiness. Nevertheless, the balancing of subjective and objective realities was important. The movement recognized that it needed to broaden its base for events like coronations and proclamations of the coming of heaven to take root and have long-term viability.

Concluding Coronations

The movement conducted a fourth Crown of Peace ceremony in the auditorium of the Seoul National Assembly Library on August 20, 2004. Sensitivities there about church-state relations were seemingly non-existent, and the movement was confident enough to conduct an international marriage blessing as well as the coronation in the 400-seat auditorium. There were numerous foreign dignitaries in attendance since the event was conducted in conjunction with an UM conference, "Ambassadors for Peace in the 21st century: Establishing a Culture of Heart and Providing Leadership for a World in Need." On the Korean side, the invited guests included ten incumbent members of the National Assembly and twenty or thirty former members, plus representatives of provincial and city governments. [106] Never one to minimize the significance of a providential moment, Rev. Moon described the occasion as "a victory for humanity and a joyful event for God. It surpasses any event in history and will never be equaled in the future." [107] Two days after the event, the movement conducted a Rally Welcoming the King of Peace before twenty-one thousand members at Sun Moon University. [108]

As mentioned, Rev. Moon directed that the movement conduct Crown of Peace ceremonies in forty nations and on all six continents by the end of 2004. He also directed that members hold King of Peace ceremonies for their clans and tribes. [109] For the national-level events, crowns were presented to movement leaders, representing Rev. and Mrs. Moon. This culminated in a fifth Crown of Peace ceremony at the Wardman Park Marriott Hotel in Washington, D.C. on December 13, 2004. Having conducted ceremonies in forty nations, this coronation was understood to fulfill conditions at the world level. Consistent with previous ceremonies, the Peace King coronation was conducted during an evening banquet in conjunction with an IIFWP global leadership summit, an Ambassador for Peace awards program, and a *Washington Times* "Common Legacy Breakfast Summit," events which included some three thousand members and guests. Given the crowded banquet venue, there was no stately entrance and no public notice or controversy.

The movement conducted a sixth and final Crown of Peace ceremony at its Cheongpyeong complex in Korea on February 14, 2005. It was titled the "Coronation of the Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humankind as the King and Queen of Peace for Uniting Heaven and Earth," and brought to a conclusion the substantiation of heavenly kingship which had been proclaimed in Israel, the United States, Korea, and throughout the world. It overlapped with another IIFWP World Summit, "Universal Values and Lasting Peace: Toward a New Model of Global Governance" which was convened at the Cheongpyeong facility for 300 delegates. There were reportedly over 800 busses and 30,000 members in various halls and buildings of Cheongpyeong for the ceremony. [110] Crowns that had been presented from forty nations were on display. "Standing on these providential victories," Rev. Moon stated, "the world's six billion people" had entered a new stage in the "process of building the Kingdom of the Cheon Il Guk." The task now was "to spread the seeds." As he put it,

Each of us should become the creators of this new world... There is no turning back; the arrow has left the bow. There is no room for negotiation or compromise. The completion and perfection of God's providence alone awaits us at the finish line. [111]

For all the forward movement, there was a shadow side to these developments, and it related to the movement's struggle to expand its grassroots base. This had been addressed by Rev. Moon on numerous occasions and remained a point of emphasis.

Managing Strain

The “Peace King” coronations did not have a significantly negative effect on UM coalition partners. For one thing, associated clergy and supporters had become familiar enough with the movement’s messianic premises that messianic intrusions were neither unexpected nor unsettling. Supporters, in effect, knew the drill. This was especially the case for veterans of earlier controversies who stayed the course. For some of them, messianic displays were innocuous. For others they were a source of fascination, even religious meaning.

The UM softened the effect of its coronations by conducting them within the context of high-end meetings sponsored by one or more related entities or as part of broadly-based awards ceremonies. As noted, the movement bussed in a number of VIP guests, including three Nobel Peace Laureates, from a World Summit on Leadership and Governance to the Coronation of the King of the Blessed Families in early 2003. It conducted the Peace King coronation at the Dirksen Senate Office Building within the context of a major awards ceremony backed by a host committee that included six congressional co-chairs and an invitational committee that included three additional congressmen as well as a one current and one retired U.S. senator, four state senators, and a former ambassador. Although Rev. and Mrs. Moon’s Crown of Peace Award was unique, several dozen religious and civic leaders were also honored at that time.

The movement adopted additional measures to offset dissonance between its coronation ceremonies and what was acceptable to the wider public. As noted, the UM’s primary American publication postponed coverage of coronations until Rev. and Mrs. Moon’s direct participation in a Peace King event on U.S. soil made that impossible. It also published careful statements to the effect that Rev. Moon did not wish to “unite church and state” or establish an official state religion. In addition, Peace King coronations were closed events in the U.S., as a further concession to sensitivities and in an effort to shield participants from criticism. However, when they were publicized and subjected to derision, UM representatives attacked media portrayals and claimed they were not markedly different than other award ceremonies.

In the end, the movement tried to have it both ways. One leader, addressing members, stated that neither God nor Rev. Moon “need a crown to become king; they already are.” The important thing was that “America offered the crown.” In his interpretation, America was saying to Rev. Moon, “Please be our king.” [112] On the other hand, movement spokespersons emphasized that Rev. Moon had no interest in temporal power, crowns were simply emblematic of lifetime achievement, and ceremonial robes were similar to those worn by other clerics during the proceedings. The UM worked to hold the messianic and publicly acceptable elements together, but it was a combustible mixture held together by Rev. Moon’s charismatic presence. Ironically, in succeeding years cracks developed not so much among the UM’s coalition partners as within its core membership.

Conclusion

During the later years of his ministry, Rev. Moon shifted major responsibilities to his adult children. This introduced new complexities and new models of ministry. [113] Two of these ministries are of particular interest, as they rejected and broke away from the mainstream movement. As previously noted, a constituency centered on his eldest living son broke away and defined itself exclusively as a peace movement, in effect aligning with the movement’s coalition partners at the expense of its messianic core. Another constituency led by his youngest living son broke off and identified itself exclusively with the movement’s messianic core at the expense of its coalition partners. The mainstream movement, centered on Rev. Moon’s widow, continued to balance its commitment to the UM’s messianic core and the wider society.

Hyun Jin (Preston) Moon, Rev. Moon’s eldest son, was viewed by many as his putative successor and rose rapidly to the top of the movement’s hierarchy by 2008. Nonetheless, he was avowedly anti-theological and anti-institutional. He called on the movement to “get rid of its church-centered framework and reconnect... as the model of an interreligious, international, interracial... peace movement.” [114] He invested great effort and resources in convening Global Peace Festivals (GPFs) worldwide in 2008-09. When Rev. Moon asked him to discontinue these in 2009 and spend the next year with him, Hyun Jin refused and was relieved of all leadership positions. He then severed GPF’s organizational connection to the UM and continued to control a multitude of movement business interests and properties, a number of which he liquidated to support continued GPF-related activities.

In his actions, Hyun Jin presented a challenge to the UM that was unprecedented. Essentially, he embodied a rival charismatic center. In the end, he emphasized the fallibility of Unification leaders, including Rev. Moon, and deconstructed the messianic standing of his family by stating, “Do not think that when I refer to the True Family, I am referring to my siblings and relatives.” [115] He continued to function as a foundation head, contributing from the largess of UM resources to peacemaking initiatives of his choosing. [116]

Hyung Jin (Sean) Moon, Rev. Moon’s youngest son, arose as it were, phoenix-like, from the ashes of his elder brother. In 2009, Rev. Moon made him the movement’s International President and future “inheritor.” Unlike Hyun Jin, Hyung Jin’s interests

were theological and pastoral. He pursued an intense regimen of meditation and spiritual practices and attended Rev. Moon in the manner of a devotee. After Rev. Moon's passing, Hyung Jin broke with his mother and relocated to what he called the "wilderness" of Pennsylvania. There, he founded a "Sanctuary Church" and castigated the UM for allegedly deviating from the teaching and practice of his father.

He directed followers to resign from movement organizations, announced the "removal" of all Unification leaders, called on members to take over UM boards, and referred to his mother as "the Whore of Babylon" and himself as Cheon Il Guk's "second king," wearing a crown on ceremonial occasions. He began conducting rival marriage blessings, liberations of ancestors and dictated a "constitution" that made himself and his male heirs temporal monarchs. He rejected the world's "predatory elites" and its "postmodern, humanistic, secular feminist ideology." Espousing Second Amendment rights and the use of firearms, his group took on the character of a warring messianic sect. [117]

The most important development within the mainstream movement following Rev. Moon's passing was the emergence of his widow, Hak Ja Han Moon. She acted decisively to consolidate her position as leader of FFWPU. [118] She also articulated and began to implement a distinctive model of ministry meant to extend her husband's "victorious foundation." [119] Importantly, she emphasized that Rev. Moon "is always with us" and uniquely present to her. As she put it, "Father's thinking is my thinking, and my thinking is Father's thinking." [120] To be sure, there were discordant notes in her efforts to carry on Rev. Moon's ministry. Most notably, she approached ministry from a maternal-matriarchal perspective. In particular, she emphasized care giving and for want of a better word, housekeeping functions. Early on, she stressed "true love and care for the members," family time, and respect for women. [121] She indicated that a major focus would be education of the UM's next generation and established a multi-million dollar scholarship fund. [122] Two of her major projects were to prepare a definitive edition of Rev. Moon's teachings and a church constitution. [123] As she put it, "Father built a huge house ... Now we need to put things in order and make things more presentable." [124]

These initiatives scandalized those who wished to freeze Rev. Moon's ministry, words, and memory within a static orthodoxy. However, the UM needed to adapt to new times and circumstances. Mrs. Moon clearly recognized this. She testified to her husband's ongoing inspiration and presence, but was prepared to build upon his foundation by incorporating her distinctive experience and insights. In fact, she described her ministry as "the second phase of True Parents' course, centering on True Mother." [125] In so doing, she was more than willing to assert her messianic *bona fides* as God's "Only Begotten Daughter." [126]

At the same time, the essential continuity between her ministry and that of Rev. Moon lay in her commitment to "liberate all humanity and bring back all 6.5 billion people to Heaven." [127] To this end, she continued cultivating notables as in her establishment of the Sunhak Peace Prize, modeled after the Nobel Peace Prize. This was vintage Unificationism, combining as it did messianic necessity and coalition-building, or what card-carrying Unificationists characterize as the vertical and the horizontal. How the mainstream movement balances these competing pulls will likely determine its dynamism going forward.

Notes

[1] See Michael Mickler, "The Post-Sun Myung Moon Unification Church," in Eileen Barker, *Revisionism and Diversification in New Religious Movements* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 47-63

[2] See Michael Mickler, "The Sanctuary Church Schismatics," *Applied Unificationism*, December 14, 2015. <https://appliedunificationism.com/2015/12/14/the-sanctuary-church-schism/>

[3] *Divine Principle* (New York: HSA-UWC, 1973), p. 16.

[4] "A Cloud of Witnesses: The Saints' Testimonies to the True Parents." http://www.tparents.org/UNews/Unws0207/newpaper_sw_messages.htm

[5] Michael Mickler, *40 Years in America: An Intimate History of the Unification Movement, 1959-1999* (New York: HSA-UWC, 2000), pp. 386-92.

[6] Mickler, *40 Years in America*, pp. 550-58.

[7] He was the author of *Unification Thought* (1973), *Explaining Unification Thought* (1981), *Fundamentals of Unification Thought* (1991) as well as numerous philosophical papers and booklets.

[8] Sun Myung Moon, "Address at the Leader's Meeting," June 22, 2001. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/sunmyungmoon01/SM010622.htm>

[9] Young Soon Kim, "Reverend Sang Hun Lee's Message from the Spirit World—A Seminar in the Spirit World for 120

Christians Who Illuminated History [Part 1].” <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/publications/kim-120-christians/Kim-120-Christians-01.htm>

[10] Young Soon Kim, “Report on the Seminar in the Spirit World for 120 Communists [Part 1].” <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/publications/Kim-120-Communists/Kim-120-Communists-a.htm>

[11] “Preface,” A Cloud of Witnesses: The Saints’ Testimonies to the True Parents, July 4, 2002. <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/talks/kim/Kim-CloudOfWitness.htm>

[12] Young Soon Kim, A Cloud of Witnesses: The Saints’ Testimonies to the True Parents, July 4, 2002. <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/talks/kim/Kim-CloudOfWitness.htm>

[13] Ibid.

[14] This a more accurate translation of the letter distributed on August 23, 2002: Chang Shik Yang, “Letter and Introduction to Accompany the Saints’ Testimony,” August 23, 2002. <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/talks/Yang/Yang-020823.htm>

[15] Ibid.

[16] Tyler Hendricks, “Editor’s Note,” Reverend Sang Hun Lee’s Message from the Spirit World—A Seminar in the Spirit World for 120 Christians Who Illuminated History [Part 1] <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/publications/kim-120-christians/Kim-120-Christians-01.htm>

[17] Sun Jo Hwang, “True Parents’ Directions Concerning Supporting Declarations to Messages from the Spirit World,” Memo, FFWPU International Office, July 23, 2002. <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/Talks/Hwang/Hwang-020904b.htm>

[18] Sun Myung Moon, “The Last Days Are Coming to America,” Unification News, September 2002, 3.

[19] Sun Myung Moon, “Concerning the Clouds of Witnesses,” Unification News, October 2002, 2.

[20] Hak Ja Han Moon, “The Origin of Peace Is God,” Unification News, October 2002, 16.

[21] American Clergy Leadership Conference, “Statement Regarding ‘Cloud of Witnesses,’” Unification News, August 2002, 11.

[22] “Clarification of Terminology Used in ‘Clouds of Witnesses.’” Unification News 21:9 (September 2002), 10.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Yang, “Letter and Introduction.”

[25] Michael Jenkins, “123 Churches across America End Era of Cross, Begin Era of Resurrection,” Unification News, April 2003, 6.

[26] Michael Jenkins, “Happy Birthday, America!” Unification News, July 2005, 13.

[27] “Chicago ACLC Pastors’ Prayer Breakfast,” Unification News, August 2002, 12. http://www.tparents.org/unews/unws0209/aclc_chicago.htm.

[28] Michael Jenkins, “‘Clouds of Witnesses’ in Chicago,” Unification News, September 2002, 11.

[29] “Chicago ACLC Pastors’ Prayer Breakfast.”

[30] Jenkins, “‘Clouds of Witnesses’ in Chicago,” 11.

[31] Barry Geller, “Ambassador for Peace Conference in NJ,” Unification News, September 2002, 17. See also “NY Ambassadors for Peace Seminar,” 17 and Michael Jenkins, “Ambassadors for Peace in Los Angeles,” 19-20 in the same issue.

[32] Michael Jenkins, “Ambassadors for Peace in Los Angeles,” Unification News, November 2002, 19.

[33] Ephesians 6:12.

[34] Divine Principle, p. 189.

[35] Divine Principle, p. 440.

[36] Michael Jenkins, “Reflections on the CPL Workshop,” Unification News, February 2003, 12.

[37] Michael Jenkins, “Chicago: 1500 Clergy Receive True Parents,” Unification News, January 2003, 7.

[38] Ibid.

- [39] Ibid.
- [40] Michael Jenkins, "Providential Themes at Cheong Pyeong," Unification News, December 2002, 9.
- [41] Ibid.
- [42] Divine Principle, p. 142.
- [43] Tyler Hendricks, "UTS 25th Commencement," http://www.tparents.org/UNews/Unws0107/UTS_report.htm.
- [44] Sun Myung Moon, "The Life of Jesus as Seen from God's Will, and God's Warning to the Present Age, the Period of the Last Days." <http://www.tparents.org/MoonTalks/SunMyungMoon02/SM020521.htm>
- [45] Sun-jo Hwang, "The Meaning of the Realm of Life and of the Unity and Completed Settlement of the Parents of Heaven and Earth," Today's World, August 2002, 35.
- [46] Michael Jenkins, "How the Spirit Moves," Today's World, March/April 2003, 25.
- [47] Sun Myung Moon, "Father Addresses ACLC Clergy," March 1, 2003. http://www.tparents.org/MoonTalks/SunMyungMoon03/SM030301_clergy.htm
- [48] Michael Jenkins, "Father's Direction for Clergy Education." March 2003. http://www.tparents.org/Library/Unification/Talks/Jenkins/Jenkins1/Jenkins_TF_clergy_Direction.htm
- [49] Marina Acevado, "Chicago Divine Principle Seminar for Clergy," Unification News, April 2003, 9; BillieAnn Sabo, "Los Angeles Region DP Seminar in March," Unification News, April 2003, 12.
- [50] Jenkins, "Father's Direction for Clergy Education."
- [51] Jenkins, "123 Churches across America," 1.
- [52] "Affirmation: Transition from the Era of the Cross to the Crown," Unification News, December 2003/January 2004), 18.
- [53] Ibid.
- [54] Jenkins, "123 Churches across America," 1, 4.
- [55] Bismark Bamfo, "Take Down the Cross – Boston." Unification News, April 2003, 14.
- [56] Jeff Johnson, "Christian Churches Should Stop Using the Cross, Group Says," CNSNews.com. August 22, 2003.
- [57] Johnson, "Christian Churches Should Stop."
- [58] Jenkins, "123 Churches across America," 8.
- [59] Michael Jenkins, "ACLC Pilgrimage Testimonies," Unification News, June 2003, 7.
- [60] Ibid.
- [61] Angelica Selle, "A Trip of Tears," Today's World, May/June 2003, 17.
- [62] Jenkins, "ACLC Pilgrimage Testimonies," 7.
- [63] Frank Kaufmann, "The Embrace of Brothers," Today's World, July 2003, 24.
- [64] Ibid.
- [65] Ibid.
- [66] Tom Cutts, "Longing to See Jesus in the Holy Land," Unification News, June 2003, 9.
- [67] Michael Jenkins, "Special 'Israel' Report," May 19, 2003. <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/Talks/Jenkins/Jenkins1/Jenkins-030519.htm>
- [68] Ibid.
- [69] Andrew Wilson, "Removing the Curse of the Cross: Towards a New Relationship between Judaism and Christianity," Unification News, June 2003, 11.
- [70] Ibid.
- [71] Jerusalem Declaration, May 18, 2003. <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/topics/declrtns/JerusalemDeclaration-080513.htm>

[72] Ibid.

[73] Kaufmann, "The Embrace of Brothers," 25.

[74] Jenkins, "ACLC Pilgrimage Testimonies," 7 and "Special 'Israel' Report."

[75] Kaufmann, "The Embrace of Brothers," 25.

[76] Jenkins, "Special 'Israel' Report."

[77] Kaufmann, "The Embrace of Brothers," 25.

[78] Jenkins, "Special 'Israel' Report."

[79] Michael Jenkins, "123 Churches Took Down the Cross Over the Easter Holiday," Unification News, April 2003, 8.

[80] Michael Jenkins, "Working Heart to Heart in the Holy Land," Unification News, December 2003/January 2004, 8.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Michael Jenkins, "Reflections on True Parent's Victorious Course in 2003," Unification News, December 2003-January 2004, 7

[83] See Divine Principle, pp. 464-75.

[84] Unification politics remains a contentious issue. In 2014, FFWPU published a Cheon Il Guk Constitution which was criticized for being undemocratic. See Mark Anderson et.al. "An Open Letter on the Cheon Il Guk Constitution," April 20, 2014. <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/talks/anderson/Anderson-140421.pdf>

[85] Sun Myung Moon, "The Kingdom of Heaven: Who Will Enter It, and How Will They Get There?" Closing Banquet, 7th World Culture and Sports Festival, January 29, 2001. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/sunmyungmoon01/SM010129a.htm>

[86] The official title of the ceremony was "Enthronement Ceremony of the Parent of the Cosmos and the Parents of Heaven and Earth Who Reign over the Blessed Families as the King and Queen of Peace and Unity," see Chambumo Gyeong (Korea: Seonghwa Publications, 2015), p. 1629.

[87] Chang Shik Yang, "The Opening of the Gate to Cheon Il Guk through the Holy Marriage Blessing Ceremony of the Parents of Heaven and Earth." February 2, 2003. <http://www.tparents.org/library/unification/talks/Yang/Yang-030203a.htm>.

[88] Chung Hwan Kwak, "An Organization to Defend the Family and the Nation," Today's World, March/April 2003, 17.

[89] Michael Jenkins, "Bringing Harmony among Religions and Advising Political Leaders," Unification News, March 2003, 13.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Michael Jenkins, "Ambassador for Peace Awards in DC: Honoring Leadership in Reconciliation and Peacemaking," Unification News, February 2004, 8.

[92] Congressmen Danny Davis (D. Illinois) and Chris Cannon (R. Utah) who co-chaired the event, Congressmen John Conyers (D. Michigan), and a Congressman Price.

[93] The Host Committee congressional co-chairs were Danny Davis (D. Illinois), Harold Ford, Jr. (D. Tennessee), Roscoe Bartlett (R. Maryland), Curt Weldon (R. Pennsylvania), Christopher Cannon (R. Utah), and Sanford Bishop (D. Georgia). The current senator was Lindsay Graham (R. South Carolina) and the retired senator was Larry Pressler (R. South Dakota). The state senators were Mark Anderson (R. Arizona), Mark Boitano (R. New Mexico), Howard Stephenson (R. Utah), and Donzella James (D. Georgia). Anderson and Boitano were members of the Unification Church. The former ambassador was Phillip Sanchez who served as ambassador to Honduras (1973-76).

[94] Chung Hwan Kwak, "The Coronation Ceremony for the King of Peace and the King of the Second and Third Israels," Today's World, March 2004, 18.

[95] Sun Myung Moon, "Declaring the Era of the Peace Kingdom," Today's World, March 2004, 23.

[96] "Testimony of Rabbi Mordecai Waldman." http://testimonyofthemoon.blogspot.com/2011/02/testimony-of-rabbi-mordecai-waldman_22.html

[97] Cheryl Wetzstein, "Honor for the Peacemakers," Washington Times, March 24, 2004, B1.

[98] John Gorenfeld, *Bad Moon Rising* (San Francisco: PolliPointPress, 2008), p. 91.

- [99] Charles Babington and Alan Cooperman, "The Rev. Moon Honored at Hill Reception," *Washington Post*, June 24, 2004, A1.
- [100] Sheryl Stolberg, "A Crowning at the Capitol Creates a Stir," *New York Times*, June 24, 2004. <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/24/us/a-crowning-at-the-capital-creates-a-stir.html?src=pm>
- [101] Mike Leone, "Interfaith Leaders Address "Crown" Controversy," *Unification News*, July 2004, 6.
- [102] Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace, "Statement on the 'Crown of Peace' Program," *Unification News*, July 2004, 7-8.
- [103] Thomas Walsh and Karen Smith, "Notes Concerning Father's Comments and Rev. Kwak's Guidance concerning the Crown." http://www.tparents.org/UNews/Unws0404/coron_tf_kwak_notes.htm. The Rev. Barry Lynn, Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, cited the quote in his introduction to John Gorenfeld's *Bad Moon Rising*, ix. Gorenfeld also cited the quotation (105).
- [104] Walsh and Smith, "Notes Concerning Father's Comments."
- [105] "Lawmakers Scurry from the Light," *New York Times*, June 27, 2004. <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/27/opinion/lawmakers-scurry-from-the-light.html>
- [106] "Observing a Turning Point in History," *Today's World*, August 2004, 12.
- [107] Sun Myung Moon, "True Love and True Marriage," Speech at Congratulatory Banquet, Seoul, August 21, 2004. Reprinted in *Today's World*, August 2004, 6.
- [108] Sun Moon University was chartered by the Republic of Korea in 1989. It offers 38 major fields of study and includes six graduate schools. More than 500 faculty and 9,000 students reside at the school's two campuses at Cheonan and Asan, which occupy 485 acres. The majority of students are not Unification Church members.
- [109] This had more relevance for membership in Korea where clan and tribal federations are commonplace. In the West, members understood the direction applied to their extended families.
- [110] See Michael Jenkins, "Introduction to Rev. Moon's Address," <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon05/SM050214b.htm>; also "True Parents Birthday Celebration and the King of Peace Crowning Ceremony of Cosmic Unity," *Unification News*, March 2005, 17.
- [111] Sun Myung Moon, "Address at the Crowning Ceremony for Cosmic Unity," Cheong Pyeong Training Center, Korea, February 14, 2005. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/SunMyungMoon05/SM050214b.htm>
- [112] Thomas Walsh and Karen Smith, "Notes concerning Father's Comments."
- [113] See Mickler, "The Post-Sun Myung Moon Unification Church," pp. 47-63, in Eileen Barker, *Revisionism and Diversification in New Religious Movements*.
- [114] Hyun Jin Moon, "Activities and Future Directions," *Today's World*, August 2007, 10-11, 13.
- [115] Hyun Jin Moon, "Letter to the Worldwide Unification Community," November 26, 2011. <http://www.tparents.org/moon-talks/HyunJinMoon-11/HyunJinMoon-111126.pdf>
- [116] Hyun Jin Moon liquidated some \$200 million of Unification Church International (UCI) property assets. This enabled him to fund and further develop his Global Peace Festival Foundation (GPFF) ministry. He also maintained control of a \$2 billion building project in Seoul's financial district, massive land holdings in Paraguay, and nearly \$1 billion obtained by selling UCI's stake in a J.W. Marriott Hotel and shopping complex in Seoul. The UM contested this in litigation which is ongoing.
- [117] See Mickler, "The Sanctuary Church Schismatics."
- [118] See Mickler, "The Post-Sun Myung Moon Unification Church," 58-61.
- [119] Hak Ja Han Moon, "Let Us Inherit the Realm of True Parent's Victory and Open a Future Filled with Hope," September 16, 2012. <http://www.tparents.org/MoonTalks/HakJaHanMoon/HakJaHan-120916.pdf>
- [120] Hak Ja Han Moon, "Our Coming to Geomun Island has been Difficult," October 13, 2012. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/HakJaHanMoon/HakJaHan-121013b.htm>
- [121] Hak Ja Han Moon, "True Mother's Address to American Members," October 1, 2012. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/hakjahanmoon/HakJaHan-121001.pdf>; see also Mickler. "Continuity and Innovation: The Last Years of Rev. Moon's Ministry, 2009-2012," *Journal of Unification Studies*, 2014, 43-44.

[122] Mrs. Moon donated \$10 million in scholarship funds to 1,455 students through the Wonmo Pyongae (Eternal Parent's Love) Foundation, a non-profit organization established on behalf of her husband, in 2014.

[123] Mrs. Moon established a Cheon Il Guk Holy Scripture Compilation Committee and published a three-volume set of Cheon Il Guk Holy Scriptures from 2012-2015. She also gave direction that a Cheon Il Guk constitution be quickly established and presided over its dedication in 2014.

[124] Hak Ja Han Moon, "Father's Words and Achievement are Like a Gemstone," January 9, 2013. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/HakJaHanMoon-13/HakJaHan-130109.htm>

[125] Hak Ja Han Moon, "True Mother's Address to the American Leaders," October 1, 2012. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/HakJaHanMoon/HakJaHan-121001.pdf>

[126] See Andrew Wilson, "The Only Begotten Daughter." Applied Unificationism, April 13, 2015. <https://appliedunificationism.com/2015/04/13/the-only-begotten-daughter/>

[127] Hak Ja Han Moon, "Foundation Day is not the End," October 27, 2012. <http://www.tparents.org/Moon-Talks/hakjahanmoon/HakJaHan-121027.htm>